



Correspondence Manual

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Correspondence Manual prescribes specific standards and formats for the preparation of official EPA correspondence and is edited by the Office of the Executive Secretariat in the Office of the Administrator. The objective of correspondence management is to improve the oversight, quality, efficiency and flow of official agency communications.

This manual is a guide to help correspondence writers and editors produce letters, memorandums, emails and all other forms of written communication in a professional, clear, concise and organized manner. All employees who write, edit, review, sign or control agency correspondence are obliged to adhere to its standards. The 2011 edition is a Web-based document and is not be available in print.

What's New

The major changes in the [2011 edition](#) modernize the EPA's correspondence practices and reduce the agency's paper use.

Points of Emphasis

The Plain Writing Act of 2010 requires federal agencies to use "clear government communication that the public can understand and use." Some [policies and procedures](#) of the Correspondence Manual require particular attention in the 2011 edition of the Correspondence Manual in light of this new law or because their adherence has waned.

[Download a sample letter](#), in which an employee can replace the sample text with her or his own letter (April 20) (MS WORD)

[Download a sample memorandum](#), in which an employee can replace the sample text with her or his own memorandum.

Additional Documentation

- [Correspondence Management](#)
- [Clear, Concise, and Plain Writing](#)
- [Grammar, Style, and Usage Guide](#)
- [Letters](#)
- [Memorandum](#)
- [Electronic Correspondence](#)
- [Forms of Address and Titles](#)

[Top of Page](#)



What's New?

[Home](#) | [Correspondence Management](#) | [Clear, Concise, and Plain Writing](#) | [Grammar, Style, and Usage Guide](#) | [Letters](#) | [Memorandum](#) | [Electronic Correspondence](#) | [Forms of Address and Titles](#)

The changes in the 2011 edition from the 2007 edition of the *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Correspondence Manual* modernize the EPA's correspondence practices and reduce the agency's paper use. While not an exhaustive list of all the changes, this section highlights the more noteworthy changes in EPA correspondence.

Date stamp

The direction to avoid dating letters with a rubber stamp is removed. The use of a rubber stamp is as acceptable as a type date. However, type the date only when you are certain that is the date the letter will be signed or if you are permitted to reprint a final copy after it has been approved for signature.

If a typed date is not included, once a letter has been signed, the signing office or official will rubber stamp the date, centered at the top of the first page, approximately 1/4 inch below the letterhead.

Double-Sided Printing

Letters must be printed doubled sided. Only when printer limitations or legal requirements prohibit double-sided printing may a letter be printing single sided.

When signing letters with text on the other side of the paper, the signor should use care not to sign in a pen with ink that will bleed through to other side of the paper.

Email

This is short for *electronic mail* and does not take a hyphen. Use care to type email addresses without hyperlinks and in the same font as the rest of the correspondence.

Federal

Capitalize *federal* to refer to the corporate or governmental bodies that use the word as part of their formal name. Do not capitalize *federal* when used as an adjective to distinguish from other levels of governments or entities.

Federal Aviation Administration

Federal Emergency Management Agency

federal government

federal court

Gender-specific titles

Gender-specific titles should be used when referring to a specific individual whose gender is known. Gender-neutral titles, such as *chairperson* and *salespeople*, should be used only when the gender of a specific individual is not known; when not referring to a specific individual but rather to a position or title in general; or unless it is an organization's formal title.

Administrator Jackson serves as chairwoman of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force.

Except when it is an individual's preference, *chair* should not be used instead of *chairperson* as a gender-neutral alternative for *chairman* or *chairwoman*.

The following are examples of gender-specific terms and their gender-neutral alternatives.

Gender-Specific Gender-Neutral

businessman/woman executive

chairman/woman chair or chairperson

foreman/woman supervisor

salesman/woman salesperson

serviceman/woman service member

spokesman/woman spokesperson

workman/woman worker, laborer, employee

The following gender-specific constructions should be avoided, and their gender-neutral alternative should be used.

Gender-Specific Gender-Neutral

to man to staff, run, operate

man-hours work hours, staff hours

manpower workforce, human resources

Indentation

Do not indent the first sentence of a paragraph.

Margins

For general correspondence, use 0.75-inch margins on all four sides. Seven returns from the top should align the first line of correspondence so that it is just below the office name in the right margin of the letterhead. Add an eighth return when necessary to keep the first line below a long office name on the letterhead.

In some instances, a program or regional office may prescribe a specific margin format for certain types of correspondence. Check to make sure that you are using the prescribed margins before preparing your correspondence.

Page Numbers

Use page numbers only for documents consisting of four or more pages and begin numbering with page 3.

Sentence spacing

Use only one space at the end of each sentence and after all punctuation marks. The use of two spaces after each sentence is an antiquated practice dating to the era of typewriters when one space was an insufficient amount of space between the sentences for the reader. With the introduction of proportional fonts in computer word processing, double-sentence spacing became obsolete. These proportional fonts automatically assign appropriate horizontal space to each character, including punctuation marks, so there is no need to manually increase spacing between sentences with two spaces. Single-sentence spacing has been standard in books, magazines and newspapers for approximately 60 years. The *Associated Press Stylebook* also calls for only one space.

Serial comma

Use a comma after each word part in a series of three or more words, phrases, letter or figures used with *and*, *or* or *nor*, but do not use a comma before *and*, *or* or *nor*.

The greenhouse-gas reporting rule, the tailoring rule and the endangerment finding received many public comments.

Website

This is one word and lowercase. However, *World Wide Web* and the *Web* are capitalized in all uses. *Webcam*, *webcast* and *webmaster* are lowercase.



Points of Emphasis

[Home](#) | [Correspondence Management](#) | [Clear, Concise, and Plain Writing](#) | [Grammar, Style, and Usage Guide](#) | [Letters](#) | [Memorandum](#) | [Electronic Correspondence](#) | [Forms of Address and Titles](#)

The Plain Writing Act of 2010 requires federal agencies to use "clear government communication that the public can understand and use." Some policies and procedures of the *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Correspondence Manual* require particular emphasis in the 2011 edition of the *Correspondence Manual* in light of this new law. Others require emphasis because their adherence has waned.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Acronyms are pronounceable names made up of a series of initial letters or parts of words, such as *laser*, *radar*, *NOAA* and *NASA*. An abbreviation is not an acronym. *EPA* is an abbreviation.

Abbreviations and acronyms are to be used to assist the reader, not the writer. The gross proliferation of abbreviations and acronyms in much government writing contradicts the Plain Writing Act. Perhaps nothing screams "Bureaucracy!" more than correspondence cluttered with abbreviations and acronyms.

The *Associated Press Stylebook* guideline should be followed closely in this regard:

Do not follow an organizations full name with an abbreviation or acronym in parentheses or set off by dashes. If an abbreviation or acronym would not be clear on second reference without this arrangement, do not use it. Names not commonly before the public should not be reduced to abbreviations or acronyms solely to save a few words.

Agency

Agency is an acceptable reference for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, with the *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency* as first reference and *the EPA* as second reference. Lowercase *agency* in such references and when it is not used as part of the full formal name of the agency.

Email signature blocks

Email messages should employ a personalized signature block that contains the writers full name, title, office, the agency name and the writers telephone and facsimile numbers. All graphics; inspirational, religious or humorous tag lines; quotations; or other types of sayings not pertinent to the mission of the EPA should be removed from a signature block before official EPA correspondence is transmitted, as they are inappropriate for professional communications.

EPA

The first reference in all correspondence is *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*. Second references should refer to *the EPA*, not *EPA* without the definite article *the*. *Agency* is acceptable on subsequent references. Lowercase *agency* in such references and when it is not used as part of the full formal name of the agency.

EPA is an abbreviation, not an acronym. Acronyms are pronounceable names made up of a series of initial letters or parts of words, such as *laser*, *radar*, *NOAA* and *NASA*. Rather, because *EPA* is an abbreviation, it should be preceded by *the*. The use of *EPA* without *the* is a bureaucratic expression unknown to most Americans. Most media outlets also use *the EPA*.

Parentheses

Parentheses should be used sparingly in correspondence. They set up mental roadblocks in sentences and force the reader to stop reading in the middle of a sentence so as to read and comprehend the parenthetical expression. The reader must then return to the original sentence and far too often start from the beginning of the sentence and re-read the whole sentence while skipping over the parenthetical construction. This places an unnecessary, time-consuming burden on the reader.

Instead of assisting the reader, parentheses are often discourteously used to aid the writer without regard for the reader. Whenever a parenthetical construction is drafted, the writer should ask herself or himself if it could have been written without parentheses and without sacrificing clarity. If the answer is *yes*, then the construction should be rewritten without parentheses.

This *Associated Press Stylebook* guideline should be followed closely:

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Parentheses can be used for clarity by inserting a state name in a proper name.

The High Point (N.C.) Gazette first reported the news.

[EPA HOME](#)

[WORKPLACE HOME](#)

[EPA LOCATOR](#)

[ACCESSIBILITY](#)

[WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION](#)

[NEWS ARCHIVE](#)

[CONTACT US](#)



Correspondence Management

[Home](#) | [Correspondence Management](#) | [Clear, Concise, and Plain Writing](#) | [Grammar, Style, and Usage Guide](#) | [Letters](#) | [Memorandum](#) | [Electronic Correspondence](#) | [Forms of Address and Titles](#)

On this page:

- [Purpose](#)
- [Objectives](#)
- [What is Correspondence?](#)
- [The EPA Style Guidance](#)
- [Correspondence Standards and Procedures](#)
- [Correspondence Processing Times](#)
- [Sensitive and Confidential Documents and the Privacy Act](#)
- [Title V Permits, Petitions and Decisions](#)
- [Freedom of Information Act](#)
- [Federal Register](#)
- [Science Advisory Board Correspondence](#)
- [Federal Advisory Committee Act Correspondence](#)

Purpose

The *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Correspondence Manual* prescribes specific standards and formats for the preparation of official agency correspondence. This manual must be used and adhered to by all employees who write, edit, review, sign or control agency correspondence.

[Top of page](#)

Objectives

The objective of correspondence management is to improve the oversight, quality, efficiency and flow of official agency communications. This manual is a guide to help correspondence writers and editors produce letters, memorandums, emails and all other forms of written communication in a professional, clear, concise and organized manner.

[Top of page](#)

What is Correspondence?

In this manual, *correspondence* refers to any written form of paper or electronic communication, including letters, notes,

Each national-program and regional office has a staff member designated as its correspondence control point. This person supports the correspondence management process and serves as a point-of-contact for her or his office for questions regarding agency correspondence or the correspondence process.

[Top of page](#)

The EPA Style Guidance

The *Associated Press Stylebook* is the overall style guide for EPA products, including correspondence. Occasional deviations from AP practice are contained in the *Correspondence Manual*, but the vast majority of this guidance is derived from and follows the *AP Stylebook*. Modifications as applied to other EPA products such as the website and brochures can be found in the Office of External Affairs and Environmental

The 2003 edition of the *AP Stylebook* is licensed for use within the EPA and can be accessed at on the EPAs [Intranet](#). Please note that the *Stylebook* has been updated since this version linked to the Intranet was published. Many entries, particularly those relating to the Internet or the Web, have since been updated and can be found in the *Correspondence Manuals* Grammar, Style and Usage Guide section.

[Top of page](#)

Correspondence Standards and Procedures

Since much of the EPAs communication with the public is conducted through the written word, it is important that correspondence be

The quality and responsiveness of correspondence are important. The agency's image and effectiveness can be impaired if correspondence is difficult to understand, unresponsive, cold or impersonal. All correspondence should reflect a positive image of the agency.

Stationery

Hard-copy correspondence should be printed on pre-printed letterhead. The use of computer-generated letterhead is discouraged for hard-copy correspondence but acceptable for correspondence transmitted via email as PDF files. All pages after the letterhead must be printed on plain, bond paper and must match the letterhead in quality and color.

Standard Word Processing

All word processing, except for legal documents and documents for which another federal agency prescribes a specific format, must be done in Microsoft Word, which is the agency's standard word processing application. All correspondence must be typed in 12 point Times New Roman typeface.

Coordination

As coordination is a major part of correspondence management, it is important to coordinate with other staff members and offices as quickly and informally as possible. Early coordination ensures that correspondence is timely and flows smoothly through the review process.

Proofreading and Editing

Proofread your work carefully. Pay particular attention to grammar, flow, punctuation and proper format.

[Top of page](#)

Correspondence Processing Times

Specific due dates are assigned to correspondence, but, in general, the EPA should respond to all incoming correspondence in 10 business

Correspondence assignments from the White House, which usually are Presidential or Vice Presidential citizen referrals, must be completed in five business days or fewer after received by the EPA.

If the response will be delayed, send an interim reply to the citizen prior to the correspondence due date to let her or him know that her or his letter has been received and that the EPA is working to complete the response as soon as possible.

[Top of page](#)

Sensitive and Confidential Documents and the Privacy Act

All EPA information is considered sensitive from the standpoint that the agency must ensure that the integrity, availability or confidentiality of information is not compromised in any way. The EPA must also ensure that confidential information, including confidential business information or Privacy Act information, is not released to any unauthorized individual. There are six categories of confidential information.

Confidential Business Information

The EPA collects a variety of information from businesses in the process of implementing environmental statutes and legislation. Confidential business information is information that, if released to the public, could reveal a trade secret or harm a company's commercial or financial interests. Some examples of CBI include detailed contractor invoices containing labor rates, chemical formulas for new or existing chemical products or pesticides and information about certain manufacturers.

Confidential Agency Information

Confidential agency information is internal agency information that, if disclosed to the public, could harm the EPA's employees, property or operations. Some examples include agency credit card numbers, financial and accounting information, security plans, passwords and pre-award grant information.

Privacy Act and Personally Identifiable Information

Personal information that is maintained by the EPA is protected from disclosure and invasion of personal privacy under the Privacy Act of 1974. Some examples include time cards, employee records, performance evaluations, personnel action forms and leave and earnings statements. Many of these documents include social security numbers, names, addresses and earnings information.

The EPA must include a Privacy Act statement on any form that solicits personal information. This statement must include the following information: the authority under which the information is being collected; whether submission of the information to the agency is voluntary or mandatory; the principal purposes for which the agency will use the information; the routine uses of the information, as published in the system of records notice; and the effects on the individual, if any, of not providing some or all of the information.

Exemption 6 of the Freedom of Information Act also protects personnel and medical files and similar files, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. This exemption has been interpreted as protecting all personal information, unless an individual's right to privacy is outweighed by the public's interest in obtaining the information, such as compelling public health and safety reasons.

No federal agency may disclose personal information included in a Privacy Act system of records without a written request from or the written consent of the affected individual unless disclosure of the record is to or for the following:

- officers and employees of the agency that maintains the record who need the record to perform their duties;
- a routine use of the record that is compatible with the purpose for which the information was collected;
- the Bureau of the Census for planning census, or surveying activities;
- a statistical researcher in a form that is not individually identifiable;
- the National Archives and Records Administration if the information is of sufficient historical value;
- another government agency for civil or criminal law enforcement activity;
- an individual for compelling safety or health reasons;
- either house of Congress for a Congressional committee or subcommittee but not to individual members of Congress;
- the Government Accountability Office;
- a judge pursuant to a court order; or
- a consumer reporting agency in accordance with the Debt Collection Act of 1982.

Note: There are significant penalties for not complying with the Privacy Act: civil action against the agency, misdemeanor charges against any individual who knowingly and willingly discloses personal, protected information and monetary fines of up to \$5,000. Visit the EPA's official Privacy Act Manual [website](#) for more information.

Enforcement-Confidential Information

Information regarding criminal, civil and administrative proceedings that, if released, could reveal the EPA's enforcement targets, strategies or sources is protected from disclosure. Examples include confidential internal agency bottom-line penalties and other penalty information that has not yet been released outside the agency and confidential noncompliance information.

Budgetary Information Prior to Office of Management and Budget Release

Budgetary agency information that has not yet been released publicly is not releasable. The EPA's budgetary information may be released to the public only after it has been submitted to the Office of Management and Budget and Congress and has received Congressional approval.

National Security Information

Classified information that covers matters of national defense and foreign policy is not to be released. National security information is exempt from unauthorized disclosure under FOIA exemption (b)(1). Access to national security information is granted only to individuals who have the appropriate security clearance.

All the EPA employees are individually responsible for exercising alertness and discretion in handling sensitive and classified documents. Each office has a security representative to answer questions regarding responsibilities in dealing with sensitive or classified documents. The EPA's Information Security Manual and the Office of Administration and Resource Management's National Security Information Program also are resources to address questions, comments or concerns.

In addition to these six categories of confidential information, certain information is not releasable nor typically released to the public under the Freedom of Information Act and should also be considered confidential or sensitive information. For example, an additional category of confidential information is internal documents that could be protected from disclosure by FOIA exemption 5. This includes interagency and intra-agency documents that would not be available to a party in litigation with the agency and information that is considered privileged as deliberative process information by attorney-client privilege or as attorney work-product.

[Top of page](#)

Title V Permits, Petitions and Decisions

Title V Permits, or operating permits, are legally enforceable documents issued to air pollution sources such as power plants, refineries and industrial manufacturing facilities. Most large sources and some smaller sources of air pollution are required to obtain a Title V permit. This requirement comes from Title

V of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. The purpose of Title V permits is to present all Clean Air Act requirements in a single, comprehensive document, to reduce violations of air pollution laws and

Title V Petitions allow the public to request the EPA to object to a permit on the ground that the permit does not ensure compliance with all Clean Air Act requirements that apply to the source. Title V petitions are sent to the agency by law firms, state agencies, citizens and others.

Title V requires state and local permitting agencies to submit proposed permits to the EPA for a 45-day Title V review period. Title V requires the EPA to object to the proposed permit if the agency finds that it does not ensure compliance with all Clean Air Act requirements. If the EPA does not object to the permit request within the 45-day time period, any individual may, within 60 days following the close of the EPA's review period, petition the Administrator to object to issuance of the permit. The Clean Air Act sets a 60-day deadline for the EPA to respond to a public petition regarding a Title V permit. The Clean Air Act requires such responses to be signed by the EPA Administrator and expressly prohibits delegation of this signature authority.

Regional offices coordinate extensively with EPA headquarters in preparing responses to Title V petitions. Once the regional office finalizes a proposed order, it sends the proposed order to the Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards. OAQPS prepares the document for signature by the EPA Administrator. The decisions often are court-ordered and must be signed quickly, usually by a specific date.

[Top of page](#)

Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act allows individuals to obtain records information from the EPA and other federal agencies. All agency records must be made available to the public under the FOIA, except any records that are:

properly classified as secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy;

related solely to internal personnel rules and practices;

specifically made confidential by other statutes;

trade secrets and commercial or financial information that is obtained from a person and is privileged or confidential;

interagency or intra-agency documents that would not be available by law to a party in litigation with the agency;

personnel and medical files and similar files, the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy;

records or information compiled for law enforcement purposes, the release of which (a) could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings; (b) would deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or impartial adjudication; (c) could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy; (d) could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source; (e) would disclose investigative techniques; and/or (f) could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual;

information contained in or related to certain examination, operating or condition reports concerning financial institutions; or

geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells.

FOIA requests are processed through the Office of Environmental Information. All FOIA requests must be forwarded to OEI. OEI will then route the request to the appropriate office through FOIAXPress for response.

If it is determined that the requested records are accessible to the public, the FOIA coordinator or officer in each office will coordinate with his or her staff the process of locating, reviewing and making available for inspection or copying records requested pursuant to the FOIA.

Once the agency receives a FOIA request and once the requester has agreed to pay estimated fees or a fee waiver has been granted, the EPA has 20 working days in which to address the request.

FOIA requests can be made in writing or online through the EPA [FOIA website](#).

Each national-program and regional office has an appointed FOIA officer who is responsible for overseeing the management of the FOIA process in his or her office and can answer questions about FOIA.

[Top of page](#)

Federal Register

Published by the Office of the Federal Register in the National Archives and Records Administration, the *Federal Register* is the official daily publication for rules, proposed rules and notices generated by federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and presidential documents.

Federal Register packages are a type of agency correspondence and include new or proposed agency rules and agency notices to be signed by the Administrator for publication in the *Federal Register*.

The *Federal Register* workflow is as follows:

1. *Federal Register* packages to be signed by the Administrator must be submitted by the national-program or regional office via the EPA's Correspondence Management System through the Office of Policy in the Office of the Administrator.
2. After review and approval, the *Federal Register* package is forwarded from OP to the Office of the Executive Secretariat for quality assurance, tracking, special assistant review and signature.

3. OEX then forwards the *Federal Register* package to the Immediate Office of the Administrator for final review and signature.
4. The *Federal Register* package is signed or approved for autopen signature and then returned to OEX. OEX delivers the signed, completed documents to OP.
5. OP forwards the package to the *Federal Register* for publication.

[Top of page](#)

Science Advisory Board Correspondence

The [Science Advisory Board](#) is a federal advisory committee comprised of scientists, engineers and economists that provides scientific advice to the Administrator and to Congressional committees. Many major scientific policies associated with environmental problems are reviewed by the SAB.

SAB acts as a peer-review panel in reviewing major scientific points associated with environmental issues. Agency positions are reviewed to test the currency and technical merit of these positions. The SAB also recommends appointments and reappointments to agency advisory committees to the Administrator for signature. Correspondence prepared by the SAB addresses major scientific points associated with environmental issues and establishes an agency position for the Administrator's review and signature.

SAB correspondence is issued in the form of letters, reports and membership packages. After a letter or report is prepared and a cover letter attached, the documents are scanned into CMS. The correspondence is then dispatched to the appropriate program office for response.

[Top of page](#)

Federal Advisory Committee Act Correspondence

Federal Advisory Committee Act committees are created to obtain advice on a wide range of environmental issues. Every committee meeting, no matter what the subject matter or where it is held, is dedicated to open government and citizen participation. The committees are part of the executive branch decision-making process and include members who are scientists, public health officials, business leaders, citizens, community representatives and representatives from all levels of government committed to a greater knowledge about the environment and what can be done to protect it. Approximately 800 citizens sit on EPA FACA committees, bringing a variety of perspectives and expertise to the environmental consensus-building process.

FACA committees can be created by the President, Congress or federal departments or agencies and must meet these basic requirements:

must be open to the public, and the public must be permitted to present their views;

all meeting minutes and reports must be available for public access;

the public must be notified of meetings by advertisement in the *Federal Register*; and

committee membership must be balanced by different points of view.

The Office of Federal Advisory Committee and Management Outreach operates four FACA committees and has responsibility for the oversight and policy of all EPA federal advisory committees.

FACA correspondence takes the form of membership packages. There are two types of membership: representative government employees and special government employees. All packages must be entered, routed and tracked using CMS prior to submission to OEX and Immediate Office review.

Regular government employees are advisory committee members, staff or consultants who agree in advance to serve without compensation for their services.

Special government employees are individuals invited to serve on advisory committees because of personal or individual expertise and are recruited for temporary service to the government. They are appointed and may serve 130 days out of 365 consecutive days. They may or may not be compensated for their service to the EPA.

Designated federal officials throughout the agency assist in the selection and appointment of committee members and prepare and assemble membership packages. DFOs work with the Office of General Counsel's FACA attorneys to nominate and approve prospective committee members.

After OGC has approved a proposed nominee, a membership package is prepared. A membership package is composed of an action memorandum, invitation letters, reappointment letters and thank-you letters.

An action memo includes a brief sentence listing former members and why they are exiting the committee, a brief explanation describing the new-member selection process and reasons for their nomination, brief biographies of nominees in the body of the memo, membership grid showing current members, former members and new nominees with their affiliations and terms, and, lastly, a sentence acknowledging that diversity has been considered and balance requirements have been met.

Invitation letters are invitations for individuals to join a committee, which include an opening paragraph that lists the purpose and name of the committee, membership term start and end dates, an explanation of what the committee does, a reference to an enclosed Federal Advisory Committee Act copy and a reference to an enclosed membership confirmation form.

Reappointment letters are sent current members and include an introductory sentence listing the purpose and name of the committee in the opening paragraph, membership term start and end dates, a reference to an enclosed Federal Advisory Committee Act or pamphlet, and a reference to an enclosed membership confirmation form.

Thank-you letters are sent to individuals whose service with a committee is finishing and include a brief sentence stating the purpose of the letter and an acknowledgement thanking members for their service to the committee.

A membership acceptance form should be included as an enclosure to the invitational and reappointment letters with a pre-addressed envelope and should follow the format of each program office.

A copy of the Federal Advisory Committee Act or *FACA Essentials at the EPA* should be included as an enclosure to the invitational and reappointment letters.

The membership package for special government employees is slightly different from that for a representative government employee and can include confidential financial disclosure information, an ethics and confidential financial disclosure form, ethics training documents or CD and personnel forms.

More information about FACA or the FACA membership package guidelines can be found on the [OFACMO website](#).

[Top of page](#)

[EPA HOME](#)

[WORKPLACE HOME](#)

[EPA LOCATOR](#)

[ACCESSIBILITY](#)

[WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION](#)

[NEWS ARCHIVE](#)

[CONTACT US](#)



Clear, Concise and Plain Writing

[Home](#) | [Correspondence Management](#) | [Clear, Concise, and Plain Writing](#) | [Grammar, Style, and Usage Guide](#) | [Letters](#) | [Memorandum](#) | [Electronic Correspondence](#) | [Forms of Address and Titles](#)

On this page:

- [What is Plain Writing?](#)
- [Techniques](#)
- [Organized Writing](#)
- [Identify the Audience](#)
- [Write to the Reader](#)
- [Focus on the Reader's Needs](#)
- [Focus on Key Information](#)
- [Tone](#)
- [Writing Positively](#)
- [Contractions](#)
- [Pronouns](#)
- [Active Voice](#)
- [Action Verbs](#)
- [Sentences and Paragraphs](#)
- [Paragraphs](#)
- [Combating Wordiness: Writing to Express, Not Impress](#)

The Plain Writing Act of 2010 requires federal agencies to use clear government communication that the public can understand and use. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency correspondence should reflect thoughts and ideas with clarity and in an organized manner. The techniques and guidelines outlined in this section should be used as a framework in helping in the preparation of correspondence.

What is Plain Writing?

EPA employees make decisions that ultimately affect the lives of millions of Americans. If the EPA fails to communicate these decisions or if the decision-making process appears confusing, then protecting human health and the environment will become even more difficult.

Simple writing does not mean simplistic writing. Plain writing does not advocate for the shortening of agency writing. Rather, it advocates for writing that is straightforward, clear and precise. Language that is colloquial, such as what one might use in conversation or in a letter to a friend, is not appropriate when writing to stakeholders, elective officials, executives, employers, congressional leaders or the public. Plain writing does not always mean substituting simple words at the expense of more accurate, appropriate words or removing complex information to make your writing more reader-friendly. Sometimes it is necessary to include complex information in your writing, but plain writing will help ensure it is accessible and will be understood. Through the use of plain writing, the EPA strives to prepare correspondence that accurately reflects its thoughts, points and policies in the clearest possible manner.

[Top of page](#)

Techniques

Writing techniques used in the plain-writing style aim to help readers understand communication the first time they read or hear content by using common, everyday words; short, but clear and concise, sentences; and logical organization. The plain-writing style saves the agency and the public time and confusion and provides good customer service.

Working with the Plain Language Action and Information Network, the EPA uses the plain writing style to improve the clarity of correspondence, press materials, fact sheets, websites, reports and other critical documents.

More information about the plain-writing style is available at EPAs plain writing [website](#) or PLAINs [homepage](#). The National Partnership for Restructuring Government established the plain-writing style.

[Top of page](#)

Organized Writing

Clearly and directly organized writing sends a message to readers that the writer has considered who the readers are and has taken an interest in addressing their needs. Readers are more likely to be receptive to messages when writers engage the readers.

[Top of page](#)

Identify the Audience

Think about why the reader needs to read the correspondence. Whether to voice an opinion, provide factual information or ask questions, the reader had a specific reason for writing to the EPA. Public servants have the responsibility to address the writers concerns fully.

[Top of page](#)

Write to the Reader

Write to express, not impress. Do not write technical or legal letters unless they are the intended for that audience. Tailor responses to the audience, such as an elected official, scientist, association leader or a student. Legal language and government jargon are often confusing to the average reader and even to some experts. Use common, everyday words, whenever possible, to convey the message. Though the information in correspondence might affect individuals other than the reader, writing specifically to one reader conveys a sociable tone and promotes goodwill for the agency.

Writers should ask themselves:

- Who is my reader?
- What does my reader need to know?
- What does my reader already know about the subject?
- What questions will my reader have?

[Top of page](#)

Focus on the Readers Needs

After drafting responses, writers should ask themselves:

- Have I addressed the readers question, concern, comment or issue fully?
- Have I written directly and in a positive tone?
- Has my correspondence been edited and organized properly?
- Does my correspondence reflect positively on the EPA?
- Have I avoided including acronyms, jargon, parentheticals, passive voice and unnecessary information?

[Top of page](#)

Focus on Key Information

Readers read to get answers, not complicated, wordy explanations. To help readers find specific information more easily, writers should:

- use the plain writing style of writing;
- put your main idea first;
- divide material into short sections;

- group related ideas together;
- organize material in a way that makes sense;
- summarize complicated topics before describing all the details;
- place items of most interest to readers at the beginning of the correspondence;
- answer specific questions first and then move on to general questions;
- include only information that readers actually need;
- include breaks between large amounts of information; and
- not restate the obvious, especially just to use up space on the page.

[Top of page](#)

Tone

Tone is the writers attitude toward the subject or reader. The EPA is responsible for generating correspondence that is timely, well-written and respectful to readers. This can be accomplished by using a personable, but professional, tone.

Since much of EPA writing is routine, tone can cause problems when prepared correspondence that addresses a delicate matter. Though pronouns such as *you*, *we* and *our* are used when feelings are involved, one misused word can offend the reader.

Be sensitive, not heavy-handed, accusatory or defensive with readers. Insensitive writing does not convey the courtesy or goodwill readers expect.

In the example below, the first sentence uses an accusatory tone by using *failed*, while the second sentence addresses the matter using a neutral tone. Even though the second sentence uses the passive voice, it is the preferable construction to convey the denial.

Because you have failed to address this issue, we must deny your permit request.

or

Since the time period to address this issue has passed, we deny your permit request.

[Top of page](#)

Writing Positively

Avoid negative writing. Unless there is a specific reason to caution the reader against something, it is best to use positive language. Positive statements are generally clearer and more concise. Not all negative words can be removed from writing but, by following the guidelines below, writing can be more positive.

<i>Negative</i>	<i>Positive</i>
The paperwork will not be ready until Monday.	The paperwork will be ready Monday.
You did not complete the form.	You will need to complete the form.
You are prohibited from entering.	You must have clearance to enter.
Stop sending letters to this address.	The correct address to send letters is...

Avoid using multiple negatives in one sentence.

Negative: A decision *will not* be made *unless* all information has been received.

Positive: A decision will be made when all information has been received.

Negative: The request *cannot* be approved *without* payment.

Positive: The request will be approved when payment has been received.

[Top of page](#)

Contractions

Do not use contractions. Contractions shorten ideas, but are informal and should not be used in formal writing.

<u>Instead of</u>	<u>Use</u>

<i>dont</i>	<i>do not</i>
<i>wont</i>	<i>will not</i>
<i>cant</i>	<i>cannot</i>
<i>shouldnt</i>	<i>should not</i>
<i>wouldnt</i>	<i>would not</i>
<i>couldnt</i>	<i>could not</i>
<i>Ive</i>	<i>I have</i>
<i>weve</i>	<i>we have</i>
<i>youll</i>	<i>you will</i>
<i>lets</i>	<i>let us</i>

[Top of page](#)

Pronouns

Pronouns place readers in the correspondence and help them relate better to the information without being needlessly wordy.

Wordy: *The EPA has mandated clean air and water guidelines through **the EPA's** Office of General Counsel.*

Better: *The EPA has mandated clean air and water guidelines through **its** Office of General Counsel.*

The example above illustrates the use of a possessive pronoun to make the sentence more natural. *Its* refers to the subject, *the EPA*, without being repetitive.

Pronouns can be used to communicate the agency's accountability to the public and avoid using the passive voice.

The use of *you* or *your* in addressing the readers reinforces the message that the documents are intended specifically for them in a way that *he*, *she* and *they* cannot. More than any other single technique, using *you* pulls readers into the writing and makes it relevant to them.

Though pronouns are helpful, be careful not to overuse them. Using *I* or *we* at the beginning of more than a few sentences becomes monotonous and might convey self-centeredness or an impersonal tone. Do not overuse pronouns in reference to the EPA in the correspondence.

I and *my* should be used to attribute an action specifically to the writer, not the entire agency.

Using *I* routinely at the beginning of sentences places the focus on the writer, not the reader. *I would like to express* would like to notify you have the utmost regard sounds like me, me, me to the reader. Remember to write for the reader.

Do not use pronouns in situations that might lead the reader to feel personally attacked or blamed.

<u>Instead of</u>	<u>use</u>
<i>You made a mistake processing the file.</i>	<i>A mistake was made when processing the file.</i>
<i>The error you made cost the agency.</i>	<i>The error that was made cost the agency.</i>

By removing *you* from the sentence, the writer abstains from attributing individual blame, which might alienate the reader. Sometimes the passive voice is preferable to the active voice.

[Top of page](#)

Active Voice

A sentence's voice indicates whether its subject acts or is acted upon. When the subject does something or acts, the verb is in the active voice. When the subject receives the action or is acted upon, the verb is in the passive voice. Active voice makes it clear who has acted and who is responsible for what action. Active voice is important so that readers can easily tell who did what action.

Federal writing has long overused the passive voice. One of the hallmarks of bureaucratese is use of the passive voice.

Active voice follows natural sentence structure: *doer-verb-receiver of action*.

The coordinator (doer) wrote (verb) the correspondence (receiver).

Passive voice reverses natural sentence structure.

The correspondence (receiver) was written (verb) by the coordinator (doer).

With passive voice, sentences are usually longer and responsibility is not as clear. Sentences written in the passive voice are obscure and often raise more questions than provide answers.

[Top of page](#)

Action Verbs

Like the active voice, action verbs are direct and attribute action to a specific subject. Using action verbs is another technique to keep writing clear and concise.

The following examples illustrate the use of action verbs:

<u>use of general verbs</u>	<u>use of action verbs</u>
<i>give consideration to</i>	<i>consider</i>
<i>make payment</i>	<i>pay</i>
<i>give recognition to</i>	<i>recognize</i>
<i>make preparations for</i>	<i>prepare for</i>
<i>undertake an analysis</i>	<i>analyze</i>
<i>as stated in</i>	<i>states</i>

[Top of page](#)

Sentences and Paragraphs

Compact, concise writing reflects clear thinking. Short, straight-forward sentences and paragraphs help readers find the information they are looking for without having to trudge through long, tortured and complicated explanations.

Topic sentences should be used at the beginning of a paragraph when ideas are complex or information-heavy. Think of a topic sentence as a bulls-eye; it pinpoints where a paragraph is heading and what information will be addressed.

Never begin a letter with the superfluous phrase *I am writing to* or any similar phrase. The reader will be holding a letter in her or his hands; there is no need to tell the reader that you are writing a letter. It is obvious to the reader. Perhaps nothing makes a reader want to set aside a letter than one with a first sentence that begins with *I am writing*.

Short paragraphs that include basic information do not need a topic sentence. In the example below, the topic sentence before the colon adds nothing but unnecessary information to the paragraph, and the details that follow are obvious to the reader. Similar constructions that begin with *Listed below are* or variations also should be removed.

Here are details about tomorrow's conference: the EPA's FOIA training conference will be held on January 4, 2012, at the Crystal City Marriott. Registration will begin at 8 a.m. Guest speakers will include Bob Smith, Jane Doe, and Joe Q. Public. Bag lunches will be provided.

[Top of page](#)

Paragraphs

Short paragraphs are important at the opening of your correspondence. Like long sentences, long paragraphs swamp your ideas and discourage readers. Cover one topic fully in each paragraph before moving onto the next. If necessary, take more than one paragraph to completely address a complex topic.

Distinct paragraphs flow in a structured manner with the most important information at the beginning, immediately addressing the readers needs.

[Top of page](#)

Combating Wordiness: Writing to Express, Not Impress

Take out unnecessary words. Do not use big words to impress readers; the goal is to provide information that can be easily read and understood the first time the correspondence is read. When proofreading, tighten the writing so that it includes only necessary information and words.

It is unnecessary and often against the Plain Writing Act to use a long word or phrase when a simple one will do. The following list includes words and phrases that are often used to impress instead of express and includes their plain-writing substitutions.

<u>Instead of</u>	<u>use</u>
a and/or b	a or b, or both
a number of	some
accompany	go with
accomplish	carry out, do
accorded	given
accordingly	so
accrue	add, gain
accurate	correct, exact, right
additional	added, more, other
address	discuss
addressees	you
adjacent to	next to
advantageous	helpful
adversely impact	hurt, harm, set back
advise	recommend, tell
afford an opportunity	allow, let
aircraft	airplane
allocate	divide
anticipate	expect
a number of	some
apparent	clear, plain, obvious
appreciable	many
appropriate	proper, right, correct
approximate	about
arrive onboard	arrive
as a means of	to
ascertain	find out, learn
as prescribed by	in, under
assist, assistance	aid, help
attain	meet
attempt	try
at the present time	now, at present, presently
because of the fact that	since, because
benefit	help
by means of	by, with
capability	ability
caveat	warning
close proximity	near, around
combat environment	combat
combined	joint
commence	begin, start
comply with	follow
component	part
comprise	form, include, make up
concerning	about, on
consequently	so
consolidate	combine, merge, join
constitutes	is, forms, makes up
contains	has
convene	meet
currently	now, presently
deem	believe, consider, think
delete	cut, drop
demonstrate	prove, show

	leave
designate	appoint, name, choose
desire	want, wish
disclose	show
discontinue	drop, stop
disseminate	give, issue, pass, send
due to the fact that	due to, since, because
during the period	during
effect changes	make changes
elect	choose, pick
employ	use
encounter	meet
endeavor	try
enumerate	count
equipments	equipment
equitable	fair
evidenced	showed
evident	clear
exhibit	show
expedite	hasten, speed up
expeditious	fast, quick
expend	spend
expertise	ability
expiration	end
facilitate	ease, help
failed to	did not
feasible	workable, can be done
females	women
finalize	complete, finish
for a period of	for
for the period of	for, from
for the purpose of	for, to
forfeit	give up, lose
forward	send
frequently	often
function	act, role, work
furnish	give, send
has a requirement for	needs, requires
herein	here
heretofore	until now, until this point
herewith	here, below
however	but
identical	same, similar
identify	find, name, show
immediately	at once
impacted	affected, changed
implement	start, carry out
in accordance with	by, following, per, under
in addition	also, besides, too
in an effort to	to
in a timely manner	on time, promptly
in lieu of	instead, instead of
in many cases	often
in order that	for, so,
in order to	to

	about, concerning, on
in the amount of	for
in the event of, in the event	if
in the near future	soon, shortly
in view of	since, because
in view of the above	so
is applicable to	applies to
is authorized to	may
is in consonance with	agrees with, follows
is responsible for	handles
it appears	seems
it is essential	must, need to
it is requested	please, we (or I) request
inasmuch as	since
inception	start, beginning
incumbent upon	must, based on
indication	sign
initial	first, primary
initiate	start, begin
interface	meet, work with,
interpose no objection	do not object
liaison	discussion
limited number	limits, limited
magnitude	size
maintain	keep, support
maximum	greatest, largest, most
methodology	method
minimize	decrease, shorten
minimum	least, smallest
modify	change
monitor	check, watch
necessitate	cause, need
not later than	by, before
notwithstanding	still, in spite of
numerous	many
objective	aim, goal
obligate	bind, compel
observe	see, watch
operate	use, work, run
optimum	best, greatest, most
option	choice, way
parameters	limits
participate	take part
perform	do, work
permit	let
pertaining to	about, on, of
portion	part
possess	have, own
practicable	practical
preclude	prevent
previous	earlier
previously	before
prioritize	rank
prior to	before
proceed	do, go ahead, try

	skill
promulgate	issue, publish
provide	give, offer, say
provided that	if
provides guidance for	guides
purchase	buy
pursuant to	by, following, per, under
reflect	say, show
regarding	about, of, on
relative to	about, on
relocate	move
remain	stay
remainder	rest
remuneration	pay, payment
render	give, make
represents	is, shows
request	ask
requirement	need
reside	live
retain	keep
said, some, such	the, this, that
selection	choice
set forth in	in
signed into law	signed
similar to	like
solicit	ask for, request
state-of-the-art	latest, modern
subject	the, this, your
submit	give, send
subsequent	later, next
subsequently	after, later, then
substantial	large, much
successfully complete	complete, pass
sufficient	enough
terminate	end, stop
the month of	January, etc.
the question as to whether	whether
therefore	so
therein	there
there is, there are, that is, that are	<i>rewrite to avoid</i>
thereof	its, their
the undersigned	I, you
this agency, this office	we, us
timely	prompt
time period	time, period
transmit	send
under the provisions of	under
until such time as	until
utilize, utilization	use
validate	confirm
viable	practical, workable
vice	instead of, versus
warrant	call for permit
whereas	because, since
with reference to	about

	except for
witnessed	saw
your office	you

Common, Everyday Words

Do not use technical language unless the correspondence calls for it and the readers can understand it. Use common, everyday words to communicate. Readers might know that *appreciable* means *many* or that *preclude* means *prevent*, but they should not have to translate.

<u>Technical</u>	<u>Common</u>
commence	start
demonstrate	show
endeavor	try
equitable	fair, just
facilitate	help
optimum	best
substantial	large

Keep it in the Courtroom

Legal words should not be used unless specifically addressing legal matters or situations that call for their use. Instead, use their common counterparts.

<u>Legal</u>	<u>Common</u>
aforesaid/aforementioned	the, those, that
heretofore	until now, up to this point
herewith is	here is
notwithstanding	in spite of
the undersigned	I, you, we

Be Concrete

Consider the sentence:

The offices are in agreement.

To do what? About what? To whom is this sentence speaking? Which offices are in agreement? These are some of the questions that arise when sentences are vague. Concrete writing includes specifics, not general terms that are often obscure and do not reveal much more information than the example above does. General terms are used to sum up information when the reader is already knows to what the writer is referring.

In the example above, *offices* could represent the Office of the Executive Secretariat, the Office of Research and Development, the Office of Administration and Resources Management, the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs or any agency program and regional offices. Unless the reader already knows the specific references, he or she will be lost. Be concrete in writing and spell out specifics. It might take longer to write all of the information out, but it will prevent confusion on the readers part.

Be Consistent

Use the same terms consistently throughout the correspondence to identify specific thoughts or subjects. If writing the *EPA employees*, continue to use this term throughout. Do not substitute another term, such as *agency personnel*, which might lead the reader to question whether this refers to the same group of individuals.

Delayers

These expressions delay meaning and tangle sentences. Unless *it* refers to a person, place or thing that has already been mentioned, avoid beginning your sentences with *it*. *There is*, *there are* and *I want to* delay the sentence from getting to the point and might force readers to return to a previous sentence for reference. In many instances, simple subtraction of these terms will result in a clearer message.

It is

<i>Before</i>	<i>After</i>
It is our intention	We intend
It is necessary that you	You need to
It is apparent that	Clearly
It is my understanding	I understand
It is recognized that	We recognize

There is/There are

Before: There are some rules that must be followed.

After: Some rules must be followed.

Before: There is a need to ensure office safety.

After: A need to ensure office safety exists.

Before: There will be a mandatory staff meeting in the Green Room today.

After: A mandatory staff meeting will be held today in the Green Room.

I want to

Do not waste the readers time building up to your point. Just say it.

Before: I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your many years of service to the EPA.

After: Thank you for your many years of service to the EPA.

Modifiers

Watch out for *-ly* words. Do not complicate your ideas; words ending in *-ly* often overstate an idea and do little to improve strong arguments or support weak ones.

<i>Rather than Saying...</i>	<i>Say</i>
I absolutely agree	I agree
I certainly believe	I believe
I successfully completed	I completed
I really feel bad	I feel bad

The latter sentence sounds more professional.

We are extremely excited about this initiative.

We are excited about this initiative.

Doublings

Do not repeat a general idea by using similar words. Often used to emphasize a thought or idea, doublings tend to overemphasize. Though the writer may use doublings to complement an idea, they are of little use to a reader.

<i>Common Doublings</i>	<i>Use One</i>
any and all	any <i>or</i> all
each and every	each <i>or</i> every
full and complete	full <i>or</i> complete
stimulated and interested	stimulated <i>or</i> interested
help and support	help <i>or</i> support
review and comment	review <i>or</i> comment
interest and concern	interest <i>or</i> concern
order and direct	order <i>or</i> direct

Before: We are pleased and delighted to offer you a position in our office.

After: We are pleased to offer you a position in our office.

After: We are delighted to offer you a position in our office.

Noun Sandwiches

Noun sandwiches are clusters, or long strings, of nouns that are sandwiched together. The use of prepositions help break up these noun sandwiches and help make your intended meaning clearer.

Before: underground water supply safety testing program

After: program for testing the underground water supply

[Top of page](#)

[Local Intranets](#)[Ask a Librarian](#)[How Do I?](#)[A-Z Index](#)

Grammar, Style and Usage

[Home](#) | [Correspondence Management](#) | [Clear, Concise, and Plain Writing](#) | [Grammar, Style, and Usage Guide](#) | [Letters](#) | [Memorandum](#) | [Electronic Correspondence](#) | [Forms of Address and Titles](#)

a.m., p.m.

They are always used with periods and are never capitalized. *Noon* is acceptable for 12 p.m., and *midnight* is acceptable for 12 a.m. Avoid redundant expressions such as *9 a.m. tomorrow morning*, *10 p.m. last night* or *12 noon*.

a, an

The indefinite article *a* is used before consonant sounds.

a historic step

a one-year extension

a unified-command center

An is used before vowel sounds.

an honorable, good-faith effort

an NGA-sponsored event

an April shower

abbreviations and acronyms

Acronyms are pronounceable names made up of a series of initial letters or parts of words, such as *laser*, *radar*, *NOAA* and *NASA*. An abbreviation is not an acronym. *EPA* is an abbreviation.

Abbreviations and acronyms are to be used to assist the reader, not the writer. The gross proliferation of abbreviations and acronyms in much government writing contradicts the Plain Writing Act. Perhaps nothing screams Bureaucracy! more than correspondence cluttered with abbreviations and acronyms.

The *Associated Press Stylebook* guideline should be followed closely in this regard:

Do not follow an organization's full name with an abbreviation or acronym in parentheses or set off by dashes. If an abbreviation or acronym would not be clear on second reference without this arrangement, do not use it. Names not commonly before the public should not be reduced to abbreviations or acronyms solely to save a few words.

adverse, averse

Adverse means to be opposite to or to be opposite of.

There are two adverse ocean currents.

Averse means to have a feeling of opposition toward.

I am averse to your project proposal.

affect or effect

Affect as a verb means to simulate; to imitate or copy; to attack or infect; or to influence. It is almost never used a noun in EPA correspondence

She was affected by the smoke.

These new rules will affect your permit application.

Effect as a noun means a result or something brought about by a change.

The effect of the new regulation was felt agencywide.

The drug had a quick effect.

Effect as a verb means to bring about or cause.

The vision and leadership of the Administrator has effected positive change in the agency's employees.

agency

Agency is an acceptable reference for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, with the *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency* as first reference and *the EPA* as second reference. Lowercase *agency* in such references and when it is not used as part of the full formal name of the agency.

agencywide

Words with the *wide* suffix do not take a hyphen and are one word.

all ready, already

All ready means to be prepared.

The documents are completed, packaged and all ready to be mailed.

Already means to have happened previously; an act or action that has taken place.

The documents have already been sent.

among, between

In general, *between* introduces two items, and *among* introduces more than two items.

apostrophes

To express possession, in general, add *s* to the end of nouns not ending in *s* and add just an apostrophe in words ending in *s*.

An exception is a singular common noun that ends in *s*, unless the next word begins with *s*.

the press's insistence

the press' second guessing

No apostrophe is needed for words ending in *s* that are more descriptive than possessive. This can be determined if *for* or *by* would work rather than *of*. An exception to this is if a plural word does not end in *s*.

engineers handbook

writers correspondence manual

farmers college

childrens daycare

Also, *the attorney generals decision, the attorneys generals joint letter, John Smith Jr.s application, three weeks notice* and *all in a days work*.

Indicate joint possession by placing an apostrophe on the last noun of a series.

Iowa and Ohio's lawsuit was overturned on appeal.

Mr. Jones and Mr. Smith's application has been approved.

Place *s* on the end of each element of a series that notes individual or alternative possession.

Gov. Adams and Gov. Cahill's letters take opposing positions.

Use apostrophes in place of omitted numbers.

the '70s

the class of '96

Use apostrophes to pluralize a single letter.

Reduce, reuse and recycle are the three R's of environmental protection.

ampersand (&)

Ampersands should be use only if they are part of a formal name.

assure, ensure, insure

Assure means to make a person confident of something.

I assure you that this data are correct.

Ensure means to make certain; to remove all doubt; to guarantee.

One of the Administrators highest priorities is to make significant and long overdue progress in ensuring the safety of chemicals in our products, our environment and our bodies.

Insure means to protect against something; to make secure.

You need a rider on your policy to insure that antique vase.

backward

Backwards is incorrect.

between, among

See *among*.

biannual, biennial

Biannual means an event or happening that takes place twice a year.

The reports will be updated on a biannual basis, once in the summer and once in the winter.

Biennial means an event or happening that takes place every two years.

The House of Representatives stands for election biennially.

brackets

Brackets are used primarily in transcripts, Congressional hearings, the Congressional Record, court testimony, etc., to identify information that is addition or not specifically part of an original quotation, correction, explanation, omission, or editorial comment. They should not be used in any other construction.

[Mr. Smith nods]

Mr. KELLY [to the chairman]. From 18 to 25 individuals.

Q. Do you know these figures? [handing witness a list]

A. Yes. [reading] I know these figures.

build up (verb)

buildup (noun and adjective)

capital, capitol, Capitol

Capital means the capital of a state or country; money.

The capital of New Jersey is Trenton.

Capitol refers to a building; is capitalized when referring to specific buildings; and means the building in Washington, D.C., when referring to the *Capitol*.

The capitol building is located downtown.

The Capitol and the Ariel Rios Building are striking examples of the many neoclassical structures in Washington.

The New Jersey Capitol sits on the banks of the scenic Delaware River.

capitalization

Proper names are capitalized. A proper name is a title by which any person, place or thing is known or designated.

Washington

Lisa P. Jackson

Italy

United States Senate

London

Smith family

Microsoft

Derivatives of proper names used with a proper meaning are capitalized.

Roman

New Yorker

German

Australian

Brussels sprouts

Derivatives of proper names that are independent of meaning or are no longer identified with such names are not capitalized.

plaster of paris

pasteurize

venetian blinds

french fries

A common noun or adjective that is an essential part of a proper name is capitalized. In all other instances, common nouns and adjectives are printed in lower case. Without being attached to these proper names, *avenue, building, monument, canal* and *city* would be lowercase.

Massachusetts Avenue

Ariel Rios Building

Washington Monument

Panama Canal

Jersey City

The plural form of a common noun that is part of a proper name is not capitalized. The exception to this rule is the pluralization of formal titles with full names.

lakes Superior and Huron

Pennsylvania and Constitution avenues

Presidents Barack Obama and Millard Fillmore

departments of Commerce, Energy and Interior

A common noun that is used to denote time or sequence does not form a proper name and is not capitalized. The only exception to this rule is the designation of the EPA regions.

spring 2011

phase 10

table 16

section 9

Region 3

The following terms are lowercase, even when preceded by a proper name or number.

aqueduct

breakwater

buoy

chute

dike

dock

irrigation project

jetty

levee

lock

pier

reclamation project

ship canal

shipway

slip

spillway

turnpike

watershed

weir

wharf

The is capitalized when used as part of an official name or title.

The National Mall

The World Bank

The Hague

The United Nations

The generally is not capitalized when part of a newspaper, periodical, vessel, airship, train, firm name, etc.

the Washington Post

the New Bedford Times

the Spirit of St. Louis

the Battleship New Jersey

The names of existing or proposed organized bodies are capitalized.

Congress

Department of Agriculture

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Treasury of the United States

The United Nations

Georgetown University School of Law

In instances where a common noun is used to indicate or substitute for a proper name, the common noun is not capitalized.

the agency

the club

the consulate

the naval shipyard

the school of law

Capitalize *federal* to refer to the corporate or governmental bodies that use the word as part of their formal name. Do not capitalize *federal* when used as an adjective to distinguish from other levels of governments or entities.

Federal Aviation Administration

Federal Emergency Management Agency

federal government

federal court

The names of holidays, religious feast days and historic events are capitalized.

All Saints Day

Battle of Gettysburg

Diwali

Easter

Fourth of July

Hanukkah

Passover

Ramadan

World War II

The name of a phylum, class, order, family or genus is capitalized. The name of a species is not capitalized even though it is derived from a proper name.

Porcupine Caribou:

Chordate (phylum)

Mammal (class)

Artopdactyla (order)

Cervidae (family)

Rangifer (genus)

tarandus (species)

In soil science, soil classifications are capitalized.

Brown

Dark Brown

Bog

Capitalize the name of celestial bodies that are proper names.

Earth

Mars

Halleys comet

Do not capitalize celestial bodies that are common nouns or when used as a common noun.

the moon

the stars

the sun

Lets take a down-to-earth approach.

Historical or political events that have been given proper names are capitalized.

Great Depression

Great Recession

Holocaust

Prohibition

Third World

New Deal

Civil, professional, military, nobility and religious titles preceding individuals names are capitalized.

Assistant Administrator for Tribal and International Affairs Michelle DePass

Region 8 Administrator Jim Martin

Ambassador Rooney

However, titles following individuals names are not capitalized.

Gina McCarthy, assistant administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation

Gwen Keyes Fleming, Region 4 administrator

Daniel Rooney, the U.S. ambassador to Ireland

President is always capitalized when referring to the U.S. President. *Vice President* is always capitalized when referring to the U.S. Vice President. *Administrator* is always capitalized when referring to the EPA Administrator. *Deputy Administrator* is always capitalized when referring to the EPA Deputy Administrator. These are exceptions to the *AP Stylebook*.

The titles of publications, periodicals, annual reports, historical documents, acts and works of art are capitalized, as is any important immediate word relating to such publications.

Declaration of Independence

the Treaty of Versailles

Readers Digest

New York Times Magazine

Marbury v. Madison

Starry Night

Freedom of Information Act

Alien and Sedition Acts

All principal words are capitalized and italicized in names of articles, books, captions, chapter headings, essays, editorials, motion pictures, plays, radio and television programs, poems, songs and reports. Articles, conjunctions and prepositions are capitalized only when used as the first word of the title.

Citizen Kane

Silent Spring

Things Fall Apart

Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit

A Raisin in the Sun

Law and Order

The first word of a sentence, independent clause or phrase, or direct quotation must be capitalized.

She asked, "And where are you going?"

He said "I refuse".

The first word of a fragmentary quotation is not capitalized.

He denied having missed the decoy.

She said to get going.

The first word following a semicolon is not capitalized. Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence.

The time has come; a new era has begun.

The Administrator has stated it many times: The EPA will be guided by science, transparency and the law.

The first word following *whereas* in resolutions, contracts, etc. is not capitalized.

Whereas the Constitution provides that

Whereas the House of Representatives allows

Whereas we have decided

The first word following an enacting or resolving clause is capitalized.

Provided, That

and provided further, That

Resolved by the Senate, That

Be it enacted, That

In headings and titles, capitalize principal words. Articles, conjunctions and prepositions are capitalized only when used as the first word of a heading or title.

Woman Fired for Destroying Records

Ex-Representative to Be Honored

Notice of Updated Records Schedule

Administrator Flies to Conference

If a heading includes both capitalized and lowercase words, with the last word being the only word in lowercase, capitalize it for uniformity.

Incorrect: *All Deliveries Sent out*

Correct: *All Deliveries Sent Out*

In matter set in all caps, abbreviations such as etc., et al, and p.m. are also capitalized for uniformity.

PLANES, TRAINS, AUTOMOBILES, ETC.

RE: THE 5 P.M. MEETING

JOHNSON BROS. ET AL.

In matter set in caps and lowercase, abbreviations are set in lowercase.

Re: The 5 p.m. Meeting

Johnson Brothers. et al.

The phrase *executive order* is capitalized only when referring to a specific executive order. *EO* is acceptable on second reference.

President Obama signed Executive Order 13514, which instructs departments and agencies to reduce printing paper use. Of all the Presidents executive orders, EO 13514 most directly affects the EPA's Correspondence Manual.

cellphone

One word

chair, chairperson, chairman, chairwoman

See *gender-specific titles*.

cite, site

Cite means to reference; to quote as example.

Remember to always cite your sources.

Site is a place or setting.

The site has been contaminated with benzene.

cities

The following U.S. and world cities stand alone and are referenced without their state or country:

Atlanta

Baltimore

Boston

Chicago

Cincinnati

Cleveland

Dallas

Denver

Detroit

Honolulu

Houston

Indianapolis

Las Vegas

Los Angeles

Miami

Milwaukee

Minneapolis

New Orleans

New York

Oklahoma City

Philadelphia

Phoenix

Pittsburgh

St. Louis

Salt Lake City

San Antonio
San Diego
San Francisco
Seattle
Washington
Amsterdam
Baghdad
Bangkok
Beijing
Berlin
Brussels
Cairo
Djibouti
Dublin
Geneva
Gibraltar
Guatemala City
Havana
Helsinki
Hong Kong
Islamabad
Istanbul
Jerusalem
Johannesburg
Kuwait City
London
Luxembourg
Macao
Madrid
Mexico City
Milan
Monaco
Montreal
Moscow
Munich
New Delhi
Panama City
Paris
Prague
Quebec City
Rio de Janeiro
Rome
San Marino
Sao Paulo
Shanghai
Stockholm
Sydney
Tokyo

Toronto

Vatican City

Vienna

Zurich

citizen, resident

Citizen refers to a person from a country. People are not citizens of a state.

U.S. citizens have constitutional rights that must be respected.

Resident refers to a person from a state, federal district, county or municipality.

California residents can be proud of the improvement and progress in their states air quality during the past 30 years.

city

Capitalize when part of a formal name or program. Lowercase in general, nonspecific references.

New York City

city government

the city

citywide

Words with the *wide* suffix do not take a hyphen and are one word.

clean up (verb)

No construction may begin on the contaminated site until it is cleaned up to residential standards.

cleanup (noun and adjective)

Superfund cleanup is nearly complete on the site of the 19th century tannery.

colon

When using a colon to join two independent clauses, capitalize the first word of the second independent clause.

The Administrator gave the task force a firm deadline: It was to issue its final report by June 30.

Colons can be used to express emphasis.

The program manager reminded the workgroup of one requirement of the application: its deadline.

Colons introduce lists.

The student learned on Earth Day about the three Rs of environmental protection: reduce, reuse and recycle.

Colons introduce quotations within a paragraph that are longer than one sentence and end paragraphs that introduce a paragraph of quoted material.

Other uses:

12:45 p.m.

2:1 ratio

Matthew 19:24

comma

A comma is used for a variety of purposes. While not an exhaustive list of all uses, this section describes and clarifies some common uses.

Place a comma between an introductory modifying phrase and its modified subject.

Once you have completed the application, the manager will review it.

Use a comma with dependent clauses.

Mrs. Doe, who is the former Administrator, chose the new location.

The rule, which required the efforts of the workgroup for 120 days, will go into effect on July 1.

Do not use commas with *that* clauses, which differ from *which* clauses in that they cannot be removed from the sentence without changing its meaning or making it less clear.

The rule that the Supreme Court upheld without comment will go into effect in 90 days.

Use a comma after each word part in a series of three or more words, phrases, letter or figures used with *and*, *or* or *nor*, but do not use a comma before *and*, *or* or *nor*.

blue, white and gray

sheep, goats and pigs

by the inch, by the foot or by the yard

whether snow, rain or heat

neither cheese, milk nor cream

If an element of the series requires a conjunction, then use a comma before the final conjunction.

The grants are for exploration, research and development, and mitigation.

A comma is used before the conjunction *and*, *or*, *but*, etc. in a sentence if the sentence contains two or more independent clauses that could be written as two separate sentences.

The plane was delayed for takeoff, and the pilot became ill.

The father dropped his son off at school, but the mother was still late for work.

Do not use a comma to join two subjects, two predicates or two objects

The new rule and its accompanying addendum have been published in the Federal Register.

The EPA is proposing 30 currently unregulated contaminants for monitoring in water systems and submitting this proposal for public comment.

The EPA received FOIA requests and press calls from the Washington Post and the New York Times.

Treat constructions with more than two subjects, more than two predicates or more than two objects as series. Use a semicolon to separate phrases in a series when clarity dictates, and place a semicolon before *and*, *or* or *nor*.

The office director, the deputy director and the administrative assistant attended the meeting.

The applicant submitted, corrected and resubmitted the forms in meet the deadline.

The honor award recipient is being recognized for her hard work, dedication and perfect attendance.

The centers receiving the grants are located at American University; jointly at Emory University and Georgia Institute of Technology; at Harvard University; jointly at the University of Notre Dame and the University of Indiana-South Bend; and at the University of Washington.

A comma is placed inside a closing quotation mark

They said "two," not "three".

"I agree to appear," she said.

Use a comma after the year in a complete date within a sentence.

September 3, 2011, was the date we met to discuss the proposal.

company, companies

Use Co. or Cos. when part of a formal name, but spell out when it used alone in second reference.

Acme Trading Co. is the responsible party. The company has agreed to clean it up to residential standards.

complement, compliment

Complement means to fill up or complete.

The colored file folders complement the cabinet.

Compliment means to praise, congratulate; to show respect.

Id like to compliment you on a job well done.

compose, comprise

Compose means to create or put together.

The work group composed a new plan of action.

Comprise means to contain, in include all or embrace.

The EPAs Region 2 comprises New Jersey, New York and the Caribbean.

connote, denote

Connote means to imply or suggest.

A sloppily written and poorly punctuated letter can connote a disrespectful treatment of the reader.

Denote means to signify; to mark; or to indicate.

The rule denotes the EPA's responsibility.

countrywide

Words with the *wide* suffix do not take a hyphen and are one word.

dangling modifier

Avoid using misplaced and unclear modifying phrases and words.

Incorrect: *Having been confirmed by the Senate, the EPA welcomed the new Administrator to the agency.*

Correct: *Having been confirmed by the Senate, the new Administrator received a warm welcome at the agency.*

dash ()

A dash, which is two hyphens between two spaces, is used only in the following instances:

Abrupt change or emphatic pause: *The workgroup deliberated for four hours after previously agreeing to meet for only 30 minutes to finalize its report.*

Series within a phrase: *The assistant administrator e-mailed the employees directors, deputy directors and staff whom she wanted to attend the meeting.*

Attribution: *"Environmental protection is about human protection." Administrator Lisa P. Jackson.*

In lists: *The Administrator gave the following instructions:*

The members would elect a chairman or chairwoman.

The task force would develop a report.

The task force would present the report to the Administrator.

dates

Do not use -st, -nd, -rd or th with dates. Use only Arabic figures.

Friday, Dec. 12, is the final day of public comment.

April 2012 is when the EPA expects to publish the final rule.

It is only a coincidence that April 1 is the date when the correction notice is published.

Dec. 2, 1970, is when the EPA opened its doors.

days of the week

The days of the week are capitalized. They are not abbreviated, except when necessary in a table.

denote

See *connote*.

department

Capitalize *department* when used to describe a government department.

The EPA worked with the Department of Transportation to establish new fuel-efficiency standards.

Lowercase *department* when used with more than one department and whenever it stands alone.

The EPA collaborated with the departments of Labor and Commerce on the green-jobs summit.

The phrase *the department* is acceptable on second reference when there would be no confusion about which department is being referenced.

The EPA and the Department of Homeland Security have been working closely on the spill response. The agency and the department will soon be issuing a joint press release.

The use of only the proper name element of departments, such as references to *Energy* or *State*, is discouraged.

Department is never abbreviated.

The use of abbreviations and acronyms, such as *HUD* and *DOE*, for departments is acceptable on second reference but care should be taken to avoid correspondence cluttered with alphabet soup.

different

Use the preposition *from* with *different*, not *than*.

The applicant has failed to show how the revised plan is substantively different from the original, insufficient plan.

disability

In general, do not refer to a persons disability. If it is necessary and appropriate to do so, though, do not precede a persons name with a description of their disability. Put people first and then mention their disability.

Correct: *Sally, who uses a wheelchair, is a leading authority on agricultural production.*

Incorrect: *Wheelchair-bound Sally is a leading authority on new agricultural production technology.*

Avoid describing people with disabilities as *suffering from* or being *victims of* their disability. Leave out terms like *handicapped*, *differently abled*, *handicapable*, and *challenged*. Similarly, do not use terms like *normal* or *able-bodied* to compare nondisabled people to those with disabilities.

Do not use the term *disabled* to describe someone with a disability. *Disabled* means inoperative or immobilized or incapable of working or being productive.

Below are some examples of acceptable and unacceptable descriptions for common disabilities:

Incorrect Correct

is autistic has autism

suffers from blindness is blind, has a visual impairment

hearing impaired, deaf-mute deaf, hard of hearing

mongoloid has Down Syndrome

is spastic, has fits has epilepsy, seizure disorder

retarded, slow has a mental disability

crippled has a physical disability

stroke victim stroke survivor

confined to a wheelchair uses a wheelchair

discreet, discrete

Discreet means modest or prudent.

With a slight nod of her head, Evelyn discreetly signaled to Beatrice that the meeting was running late.

Discrete means separate or distinct.

The offices within the agency have discrete responsibilities.

District of Columbia

Spell out in first reference. The *district* is the second-reference form, not *D.C.* Use *D.C.* only in conjunction with *Washington*.

The District of Columbia has made great progress in meeting its stormwater goals. The district is to be commended for its efforts in this regard.

ensure

See *assure*.

exclamation point

Exclamation points are used to indicate surprise, admiration, appeal, incredulity or other strong emotion in a declarative or interrogative sentence. Their use in EPA correspondence is discouraged.

either or, neither nor

They do not form compound subjects. The verb should agree with the nearer or nearest subject.

Either assistant directors or the director is required to attend.

Neither the district nor the states are in attainment.

eminent, imminent

Eminent means prominent or of high rank or status.

The well-heeled philanthropist is an eminent member of the community.

Imminent means impending.

The dark, threatening sky foretold an imminent downpour.

email

This is short for *electronic mail* and does not take a hyphen. Use care to type email addresses without hyperlinks and in the same font as the rest of the correspondence.

EPA

The first reference in all correspondence is *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*. Second references should refer to *the EPA*, not *EPA* without the definite article *the*. *Agency* is acceptable on subsequent references. Lowercase *agency* in such references and when it is not used as part of the full formal name of the agency.

EPA is an abbreviation, not an acronym. Acronyms are pronounceable names made up of a series of initial letters or parts of words, such as *laser*, *radar*, *NOAA* and *NASA*. Rather, because *EPA* is an abbreviation, it should be preceded by *the*. The use of *EPA* without *the* is a bureaucratic expression unknown to most Americans. Most media outlets also use *the EPA*.

executive order

Executive order is capitalized only when referring to a specific executive order. *EO* is acceptable on second reference.

President Obama signed Executive Order 13514, which instructs departments and agencies to reduce printing paper use. Of all the Presidents executive orders, EO 13514 most directly affects the EPAs Correspondence Manual.

federal

Federal is capitalized only when it is part of a proper noun, such as the official name of a specific person, place, or thing.

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Federal Reserve Board

federal government

federal service

federal, state and local review

figuratively, literally

They are not synonyms. Figuratively means in an analogous sense; literally means in an exact sense.

Incorrect: *The judge literally blew his top after counsels egregious actions in the courtroom.* This sentence means that the judge exploded his head and gruesomely suggests that the contents of his brain were splattered all over the bench, wall and perhaps even the witness stand. *Blew his top* is a figurative expression, not a literal one, in this instance.

Correct: *The runners literally collapsed with exhaustion after finishing the grueling marathon in 90-degree heat.*

follow up (verb)

Please follow up on his email to ensure that the project is on schedule.

follow-up (noun and adjective)

The EPA is required to reject your follow-up application because the deadline has passed.

fundraise, fundraiser

They are one word.

farther, further

Farther refers to distance. *Further* refers to an extension of time or degree.

Her office is farther down the hallway.

This risk assessment will need further study.

gender-specific titles

Gender-specific titles should be used when referring to a specific individual whose gender is known. Gender-neutral titles, such as *chairperson* and *salespeople*, should be used only when the gender of a specific individual is not known; when not referring to a specific individual but rather to a position or title in general; or unless it is an organization's formal title.

Except when it is an individual's preference, *chair* should not be used instead of *chairperson* as a gender-neutral alternative for *chairman* or *chairwoman*.

The following are examples of gender-specific terms and their gender-neutral alternatives.

Gender-Specific Gender-Neutral

businessman/woman executive

chairman/woman chair or chairperson

foreman/woman supervisor

salesman/woman salesperson

serviceman/woman service member

spokesman/woman spokesperson

workman/woman worker, laborer, employee

The following gender-specific constructions should be avoided, and their gender-neutral alternative should be used.

Gender-Specific Gender-Neutral

to man to staff, run, operate

man-hours work hours, staff hours

manpower workforce, human resources

GPS

This abbreviation is acceptable in all references for *Global Positioning System*. When *GPS* is used as an adjective, lowercase the noun.

GPS devices are not standard in government vehicles.

gray

Gray is the color. *Grey* is incorrect.

historic, historical

Historic means having influence or importance on history.

This rule marks a historic step in the regulation of greenhouse-gas pollution.

Historical means concerned with or based on events in history.

The Vietnam War film is historical, not fictional.

hyphen

A hyphen is used for a variety of purposes. While not an exhaustive list of all uses, this section describes and clarifies some common uses.

A hyphen is used to avoid ambiguity.

The Administrator spoke to a group of small-business men and women.

When two or more words are used together to describe a noun, a hyphen should be used to join the compound modifiers. Very often the words in such compound constructions do not take hyphens when they are not used as adjectives.

The assistant administrator agreed to extend the public-comment period to enable more people to submit public comments.

This posting is for a part-time position, and the applicant already works full time.

When a compound modifier follows a form of the verb *to be*, the hyphen is retained, even though it does not precede a noun.

The appeal was well-crafted.

Do not use a hyphen with *very* and adverbs ending in *-ly*.

This very concise letter surely will convey your message appropriately.

The directors sternly worded rebuke elicited no reaction.

Hyphens are used to avoid double vowels and triple consonants.

pre-empt

bell-like

Other uses:

forty-four

5- to 10-month extension

socio-economic

African-American (but *French Canadian* and *Latin American*)

imply, infer

Speakers and writers *imply* in the words they use. Listeners and readers *infer* meaning from these words.

This section of the rule implies that my corrective action is acceptable.

I must have misunderstood her when I inferred that the meeting was optional.

in behalf of, on behalf of

In behalf of means for the benefit of.

We raised money in behalf of the hurricane victims.

On behalf of means the agent of; on the part of.

The father signed the statement on behalf of his son.

industrywide

Words with the *wide* suffix do not take a hyphen and are one word.

imminent

See *eminent*.

insure

See *assure*.

Intranet, Internet

Capitalize all uses. *The Net* is acceptable on second reference.

italics

In an exception to the *Associated Press Stylebook*, italics are used in EPA correspondence. For clarity purpose, unlike the rest of this document, the following examples will not be italicized, only the pertinent italicized words.

The titles of works and publications that stand alone are italicized. They also can be underlined but the use of italics is preferred because italics are less disruptive and less jarring to the reader.

The EPA must rigorously defend its authority to regulate greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act, according to an editorial in the *New York Times*. [newspaper]

The Ariel Rios Building has an ornate hall named in honor of *Silent Spring* author Rachel Carson. [publication]

Please check with the designated federal officier for a copy of *FACA Essentials at the EPA*. [pamphlet]

Americans find great inspiration in Lincolns *Gettysburg Address*. [famous speech]

The conclusion of Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* brought the crowd to its feet. [symphony]

Michael Jacksons *Thriller* is the top-selling album of all time. [album]

The environmental community cheered the Oscar award presented to *An Inconvenient Truth*. [movie]

The Administrators appearance on *60 Minutes* permitted the agency to explain the issues to a large viewing audience. [television show]

Some find environmental meaning in Botticellis *Birth of Venus*. [work of art]

We are very appreciative of your efforts to promote environmental protection in your Broadway hit *It Isnt Easy Being Green*. [play]

Quotation marks are used with articles, book chapters, short stories and poems, songs and TV episodes. They do not stand alone but are components or subsections that make up a larger work.

Major legal and religious documents do not use italics nor are they underlined.

the Bible

the Constitution

the Declaration of Independence

the Koran

the Magna Carta

the Torah

The names of legal cases are italicized, except for the *v.*

The Supreme Courts landmark *Massachusetts v. EPA* decision instructed the EPA to decide whether greenhouse gases endanger public health and welfare.

Words used as words are italicized.

The phrase *executive order* is capitalized only when referring to a specific executive order.

Foreign words or phrases that would not be commonly known by a reader should be italicized.

Wearing a suit to a meeting at the White House is *de rigueur*.

The names of aircraft, vessels and spacecraft are italicized unless otherwise indicated.

SS America

Acela

USS Nautilus

Apollo 13

Titanic

The genus and species portion of scientific names are italicized.

Tsuga canadensis

the family *Nessiteras rhombopteryx*

Letters used as symbols are italicized. Chemical symbols and certain other standardized symbols are set in roman type.

*n*th degree

x dollars

Letters (*a*), (*b*), etc., and *a, b, c*, etc., used to indicate sections or paragraphs are italicized except in laws and other legal documents.

Resolved, Resolved further, Provided, Provided, however, Provided further, And provided further and ordered, in bills, acts, resolutions and formal contracts and agreements are italicized. *To be continued, Continued on p.____, Continued from p.____, and See and see also* are italicized in indexes and tables of contents only.

Resolved, That .

Resolved by the Senate of the United States of America, That

Continued from .

See

see also

its, it's

Its is the possessive form of *it*.

The dog overturned its bowl.

The airline delayed its approval of the merger.

It's is a contraction of *it is*.

It's imperative that you complete your assignment today.

literally, figuratively

See *figuratively*.

livable

There is no *e* after *v*.

must, shall and will

There is a difference between *must*, *shall* and *will*. According to *Websters Dictionary*, in formal writing, *shall* is used with the first person pronoun and *will* with the second and third person pronouns. Used with the second and third person pronouns, *shall* implies a command.

This table outlines the appropriate use of each.

Must	<p><u>Indicates a necessity</u>: You must complete the form.</p> <p><u>Imposes an obligation</u>: You must attend the party.</p>
Shall	<p><u>Imposes an obligation</u>: All employees shall evacuate.</p> <p><u>Predicts a future obligation</u>: In the future all employees of the EPA shall start work at 7 a.m.</p>

nationwide

Words with the *wide* suffix do not take a hyphen and are one word.

native

Native references a persons place of birth.

Administrator Jackson is a native of Philadelphia and grew up in New Orleans.

Will	<u>Predicts a future action, but not an obligation:</u> She will complete the assignment next month.
May	<u>Indicates a permission:</u> You may take leave.
May not	<u>Indicates a prohibition:</u> You may not answer.
Should	<u>Imposes obligation or preferences, but not necessity:</u> You should talk to your supervisor about this.

numbers

Examples from the *Associated Press Stylebook* on how to express numbers:

Act 1, Scene 2

a 5-year-old girl

3 ounces

4-foot-long strip

4-foot fence

3-week-old war; but three-week war

"The presidents speech lasted 18 minutes," she said.

DC-10 but 757B

a 5-4 court decision

2nd District Court

the 1980's, the 80's

the House voted 230-205. (Fewer than 1,000.)

Barack Obama defeated John McCain 69,456,897 to 59,934,814. (More than 1,000.)

Obama defeated McCain 10 votes to 2 votes in Little Junction. (To avoid confusion with ratio.)

5 cents, \$1.05, \$650,000, \$2.45 million

No. 3 choice but Public School 3

0.6 percent, 1 percent, 6.5 percent

a pay increase of 12-15 percent. Or: a pay increase of between 12 and 15 percent.

from \$12 million to \$14 million

a ratio of 2-to-1, a 2-1 ratio

1 in 4 voters

a 4-3 score

350-262-4600

minus 10, zero, 60 degrees

A thousand times no!

For uses not addressed in this list, spell out whole numbers below 10 and use figures above nine.

The two rules received a combined 102,529 public comments.

Similarly, spell out *first* through *ninth*, except when used in forming names, such as in military, political and geographic designations.

first revision

11th attempt

2nd Ward

1st Sgt.

Spell out any numbers that begin a sentence or rewrite the sentence to avoid such a construction. An exception to this rule is the expression of year.

Ninety-five percent of the employees were in attendance.

1970 is when the EPA opened its doors.

Decimals generally should not exceed two places unless there is a compelling reason to extend them. Amounts less than 1 should have a zero before the decimal point and are followed by a singular unit of measurement.

The amount of waste each person creates was 4.50 pounds per day in 2008.

The amount of waste each person creates increased by 0.50 pound during the last five years.

office

Capitalize only when used as part of a formal name. Lowercase in all other uses.

The assistant administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation will sign the final rule.

All national-program offices should be represented at the workshop.

on behalf of, in behalf of

See *in behalf of*.

online

One word.

p.m., a.m.

They are always used with periods and are never capitalized. *Noon* is acceptable for 12 p.m., and *midnight* is acceptable for 12 a.m. Avoid redundant expressions such as *9 a.m. tomorrow morning*, *10 p.m. last night* or *12 noon*.

parentheses

Parentheses should be used sparingly in correspondence. They set up mental roadblocks in sentences and force the reader to stop reading in the middle of a sentence so as to read and comprehend the parenthetical expression. The reader must then return to the original sentence and far too often start from the beginning of the sentence and re-read the whole sentence while skipping over the parenthetical construction. This places an unnecessary, time-consuming burden on the reader.

Instead of assisting the reader, parentheses are often discourteously used to aid the writer. Whenever a parenthetical construction is drafted, the writer should ask herself or himself if it could have been written without parentheses and without sacrificing clarity. If the answer is yes, then the construction should be rewritten without parentheses.

This *Associated Press Stylebook* guideline should be followed closely:

Do not follow an organization's full name with an abbreviation or acronym in parentheses or set off by dashes. If an abbreviation or acronym would not be clear on second reference without this arrangement, do not use it. Names not commonly before the public should not be reduced to abbreviations or acronyms solely to save a few words.

Parentheses can be used for clarity by inserting a state name in a proper name.

The High Point (N.C.) Gazette first reported the news.

percent

Spell it out; do not use %, except in tables and charts.

The new control technologies will reduce SOx emissions by 23 percent.

personal, personnel

Personal means on an individual basis.

That information is personal; please do not share it with anyone.

Personnel means or refers to staff or employees.

This manual should be used by all the EPA personnel who are detailed to Congress.

perspective, prospective

Perspective means an individual view; outlook.

From my perspective, the chief of staff should review this memorandum.

Prospective means likely to happen; likely to be.

The prospective bill has passed review.

Ph.D.

The plural form is *Ph.D.s* but *doctorates* or *doctoral degrees* is preferable.

planning

Future planning is redundant and should not be used.

prescribe, proscribe

Prescribe means to set down as a rule, law or direction.

Always follow the prescribed format.

Proscribe means to condemn or denounce; to prohibit or forbid.

I proscribe that plan of action as it is too risky.

principal, principle

Principal means first; highest in importance, rank or degree; chief.

She is the principal investigator.

The school principal will make the final decision.

Principle means rule or standard; a truth or law.

He is a man of principle.

quotation marks

Use quotation marks to enclose a direct quotation.

She said, "I must leave early".

He said, "forget about it".

For a quote that references another quote use opening and closing apostrophes within quotation marks.

He said, "John said, 'No'".

She said, "Maria laughed and said 'Why not?'".

Quotation marks are used with articles, book chapters, TV episodes and short stories and poems.

When you read Silent Spring, be sure to carefully read chapter 17, "The Other Road".

The panel voted "What a Wonderful World" as the top environmental song.

semicolons

Semicolons link independent clauses without the use of a conjunction such as *and*, *but* or *or*.

Your permit has been approved; you may begin construction in 15 days.

Use a semicolon to separate phrases in a series when clarity dictates, and place a semicolon before *and*, *or* or *nor*.

The centers receiving the grants are located at American University; jointly at Emory University and Georgia Institute of Technology; at Harvard University; jointly at the University of Notre Dame and the University of Indiana-South Bend; and at the University of Washington.

set up (verb)

setup (noun and adjective)

shall

See *must*.

shut down (verb)

shutdown (noun)

smartphone

This is one word and used to describe cellphones with Web-browsing capabilities, email and downloadable apps.

some time, sometime, sometimes

Some time refers to an event that has taken place.

That rule was finalized some time ago.

Sometime refers to an indefinite time in the future.

I'll get around to it sometime today.

Sometimes refers to at times; now and then.

Sometimes I choose not to take a lunch break.

states

In general, do not capitalize, particularly in all *state of* constructions and when used as an adjective with elected officials or jurisdictions.

We are awaiting comment from the state of Tennessee, the Department of Transportation and the state Department of Transportation before responding to state Sen. Jean Riley.

The notices have been mailed to all 50 states.

Region 8 has requested more information from the state.

Spell out states when they stand alone and are not used in conjunction with a town or city. Write a list of states in alphabetical order.

Region 2 staff has been working closely with New Jersey and New York to discuss the upcoming nonattainment designation.

When necessary to distinguish the state from the city, use *New York state*. When necessary to distinguish the state from the District of Columbia, use *state of Washington* or *Washington state*.

Use the Associated Press abbreviations when used in conjunction with a town or city. The state is offset with commas

The cleanup in Treece, Kan., will begin in the spring.

Anchorage, Alaska, will be the site of the public meeting.

The two states not part of the lower 48 states Alaska and Hawaii and the six states with fewer than six letters Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Texas and Utah are always spelled out, except with their postal abbreviations. The only acceptable use of postal abbreviations in the text of correspondence is in a table.

State AP USPS

Alabama Ala. AL

Alaska none AK

Arizona Ariz. AZ

Arkansas Ark. AR

California Calif. CA

Colorado Colo. CO

Connecticut Conn. CT
Delaware Del. DE
Florida Fla. FL
Georgia Ga. GA
Hawaii none HI
Idaho none ID
Illinois Ill. IL
Indiana Ind. IN
Iowa none IA
Kansas Kan. KS
Kentucky Ky. KY
Louisiana La. LA
Maryland Md. MD
Massachusetts Mass. MA
Michigan Mich. MI
Maine none ME
Minnesota Minn. MN
Mississippi Miss. MS
Missouri Mo. MO
Montana Mont. MT
Nebraska Neb. NE
Nevada Nev. NV
New Hampshire N.H. NH
New Jersey N.J. NJ
New Mexico N.M. NM
New York N.Y. NY
North Carolina N.C. NC
North Dakota N.D. ND
Oklahoma Okla. OK
Oregon Ore. OR
Ohio none OH
Pennsylvania Penn. PA
Rhode Island R.I. RI
South Carolina S.C. SC
South Dakota S.D. SD
Tennessee Tenn. TN
Texas none TX
Utah none Utah
Vermont Vt. VT
Virginia Va. VA
Washington Wash. WA
West Virginia W.Va. WV
Wisconsin Wis. WI
Wyoming Wyo. WY

statewide

Words with the *wide* suffix do not take a hyphen and are one word.

stereotypes

Refer to age only when it is relevant to the correspondence. Do not refer to a persons religion, race, or national or ethnic origin unless it is necessary in your

correspondence.

telephone numbers

Telephone numbers should be written with the area code in parentheses. This is an exception to the *AP Stylebook*.

(202) 564-4700

territories

The United States possesses five inhabited territories, which are always spelled out, except when the postal abbreviation is used in tables or on envelopes. None have Associated Press abbreviations. The territories and their postal abbreviations are: American Samoa (AS), Guam (GU), Northern Mariana Islands (MP), Puerto Rico (PR) and the U.S. Virgin Islands (VI).

their, there, they're

Their is the possessive form of *they*.

Their cars were in the garage.

There means at or in a specific place or location; a specific point or moment.

Don't go in there!

They're is the contraction of *they are*.

They're going to the third floor.

to, too, two

To means in a direction toward; reaching as far as; to the extent or degree of.

I'm going to the top.

Too means in addition or also and is offset by commas.

I, too, am disgusted by her actions.

Two is the number.

There are two apples left.

toward

Towards is incorrect.

under way

This is two words in almost all instances.

underline

See *italics*.

website

This is one word and lowercase. However, *World Wide Web* and the *Web* are capitalized in all uses. *Webcam*, *webcast* and *webmaster* are lowercase.

who's, whose

Who's is a contraction meaning *who is* or *who has*.

Who's here?

Who's seen this?

Whose is the possessive form of *who*.

Whose office are we in?

will

See *must*.

year-end (noun and adjective)**your, you're**

Your is the possessive form of *you*.

Your coat fell on the floor.

You're is a contraction of *you are*.

You're going to go to the meeting tomorrow, aren't you?

[Local Intranets](#)[Ask a Librarian](#)[How Do I?](#)[A-Z Index](#)

Letter Guidelines

[Home](#) | [Correspondence Management](#) | [Clear, Concise, and Plain Writing](#) | [Grammar, Style, and Usage Guide](#) | [Letters](#) | [Memorandum](#) | [Electronic Correspondence](#) | [Forms of Address and Titles](#)

On this page:

- [Word Processing](#)
- [Stationery](#)
- [Double-Sided Printing](#)
- [Typeface](#)
- [Ink](#)
- [Margins](#)
- [Page Numbers](#)
- [Date](#)
- [Mail Merge](#)
- [Concurrences](#)
- [Record Copy](#)
- [Delivery/Conveyance](#)
- [Hard Copy Signature Packages](#)
- [Outside Front Cover](#)
- [Inside Front Cover](#)
- [Inside Back Cover](#)
- [Outside Back Cover](#)
- [The Letter](#)
- [Salutation Line](#)
- [Form of Address Rules](#)
- [The Body](#)
- [Widows and Orphans](#)
- [Long Quotations](#)
- [Succeeding Pages](#)
- [Complimentary Closing](#)
- [Signature Block](#)
- [Enclosures](#)
- [Courtesy Copies](#)
- [Nonpersonalized Business Letters](#)
- [Legal Letters](#)
- [Multiple Addressee Letters](#)
- [Petitions](#)
- [Resolutions](#)
- [Condolence Letters](#)
- [Retirement Letters and Certificates](#)
- [Scout Letters](#)
- [The Envelope](#)
- [Outside Address](#)

- [EPA Mail Codes](#)
-

Whether a letter is addressed to the public, stakeholders, members of Congress, foreign dignitaries or employees of other federal, state or local agencies, guidelines must be followed by any EPA employee who drafts, writes, reviews, edits or signs official EPA correspondences. These guidelines are standard features for the preparation of all.

Word Processing

Microsoft Word is the standard EPA word processing software. All word processing, except for legal documents and documents for which another federal agency has prescribed a specific format, must be produced in Microsoft Word.

When preparing correspondence, documents should be prepared in either a *Draft* or *Print Layout* view. Do not prepare documents in *Web Layout* as the document may be formatted differently.

[Top of page](#)

Stationery

Letters should be printed on pre-printed letterhead. The use of computer-generated letterhead is discouraged for hard-copy correspondence but acceptable for signed correspondence transmitted via email as PDF files. This letterhead requirement applies to all agency correspondence, even routine and internal communications signed by any EPA staff member.

Use letterhead appropriate to the office in which the signing official is located. Letterhead should correspond with the signing official's office, not the office in which the correspondence originated.

Use *The Administrator* letterhead when a letter is to be signed by the Administrator or given the Administrator's signatory approval.

Use *Deputy Administrator* letterhead when a letter is to be signed by the Deputy Administrator or given the Deputy Administrator's signatory approval.

Use *Office of the Administrator* letterhead when a letter is to be signed by other personnel in the Immediate Office of the Administrator and Deputy Administrator.

National-program offices and AO staff offices use office-specific stationery, such as Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, Office of General Counsel, Office of Environmental Information.

All pages after the letterhead must be printed on plain, bond paper and must match the letterhead in quality and color.

[Top of page](#)

Double-Sided Printing

Letters must be printed doubled sided. Only in rare instances when printer limitations or legal requirements prohibit double-sided printing may a letter be printing single sided.

When signing letters with text on the other side of the paper, the signor should use care not to sign in a pen with ink that will bleed through to other side of the paper.

[Top of page](#)

Typeface

Correspondence should be typed in 12 point Times New Roman. Italics should be used only in the instances prescribed in the "Grammar, Style and Usage" section of the *Correspondence Manual*. Never type an entire document in script or italics. The line spacing of correspondence should be typed single spaced.

Use only one space at the end of each sentence and after all punctuation marks. The use of two spaces after each sentence is an antiquated practice dating to the era of typewriters when one space was an insufficient amount of space between the sentences for the reader. With the introduction of proportional fonts in computer word processing, double-sentence spacing became obsolete long ago. These proportional fonts automatically assign appropriate horizontal space to each character, including punctuation marks, so there is no need to manually increase spacing between sentences with two spaces. The [Associated Press Stylebook](#) also calls for only one space.

[Top of page](#)

Ink

Use black ink when printing correspondence.

As a matter of personal preference, signing officials may use blue or black ink to affix their signature to correspondence. No other colors are acceptable for official correspondence.

[Top of page](#)

Margins

For general correspondence, use 0.75-inch margins on all four sides. Seven returns from the top should align the addressee's name in the address block so that it is just below the office name in the right margin of the letterhead. Add an eighth return when necessary to keep the addressee's name below a long office name on the letterhead.

In some instances, a program or regional office may prescribe a specific margin format for certain types of correspondence. Check to make sure that you are using the prescribed margins before preparing your correspondence.

All correspondence should be aligned to the left. Do not center, justify, or right-align the text.

[Top of page](#)

Page Numbers

Use page numbers only for documents consisting of four or more pages and begin numbering with page 3.

Center the page number at the bottom of all succeeding pages. Do not enclose the page number in quotes, dashes, or parentheses.

[Top of page](#)

Date

The date can be rubber stamped or typed. Type the date only when you certain that is the date the letter will be signed or if you are permitted to reprint a final copy after it has been approved for signature.

If a typed date is not included, once a letter has been signed, the signing office or official will rubber stamp the date, centered at the top of the first page, approximately inch below the letterhead.

[Top of page](#)

Mail Merge

For letters that will be sent to five or more recipients, use Microsoft Word's mail merge feature. Mail merge templates allow the writer to reproduce the same letter for multiple individuals without having to re-enter the information. They also facilitate editing when changes need to be made.

A letter prepared for a mail merge must be prepared using Microsoft Word.

Prepare a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to list multiple addressees. The Excel spreadsheet should be set up to reflect the standard inside address field's format and saved to your computer so that the information may be inserted easily during the mail merge process.

1. Column 1 Salutation (e.g. Mr., Ms., The Honorable, blank for M.D.s and Ph.D.s)
2. Column 2 First Name (include middle initial when data entering)
3. Column 3 Last Name
4. Column 4 Suffix (e.g. Jr., Sr., M.D., Esq., III)

5. Column 5 Title (if applicable)
6. Column 6 Organization (all words spelled out; no ampersands)
7. Column 7 Street Address 1
8. Column 8 Street Address 2 (if needed)
9. Column 9 City
10. Column 10 State (spelled out)
11. Column 11 ZIP Code
12. Column 12 Country (for international mailings)
13. Column 13 Salutory (this field is necessary, for example, when writing to an elective office holder, M.D., and Ph.D. Be certain to use a comma and a space before this entry, such as , *Ph.D.*, so that the field prints correctly.)
14. Column 14 Custom fields (e.g. grant award numbers, project names)

All data entry in Microsoft Excel should be performed before setting up the mail merge document in Word. Remember that the suffix and salutory fields need the comma and space entered along with the entry itself.

To begin a mail merge in Microsoft Word, select the *Mailings* heading, and then select *Start Mail Merge* followed by *Step by Step Mail Merge Wizard*. The Mail Merge Wizard will take you through six steps:

Step 1.

Select *Document Type* (choose "Letters").

Step 2.

Select *Starting Document* (using a current or existing document or template). Selecting "Start from an existing document" allows you to insert a letter that has already been prepared and format it to be sent to your list of addressees.

Selecting "Use the current document" allows you to format the letter that you already have open in Microsoft Word.

Selecting "Start from a template" allows you to load an already existing template into Microsoft Word to be formatted with your letter information and list of addressees.

Step 3.

Select *Recipients* (choose "Use an Existing List" and then click "Browse" to locate and insert your prepared Excel spreadsheet of addressees.

Step 4.

Click *Next: Write your Letter* (your letter should already be visible in Microsoft Word after having chosen the starting document in Step 2). Click on More Items to insert your merge fields in the document. Space the fields as you want them to look in the final document, remembering to leave no space between Last Name and Suffix, since you added commas and spacing when preparing your recipient list in Excel.

Step 5.

Click *Next: Preview Your Letters*, so you can see what each individual letter will look like. Use *Previous: Write Your Letter* to go back and make any changes or adjustments.

Step 6.

Once you are satisfied with look of the letters, click *Next: Complete the Merge*. To personalize individual letters or perform a final check, select *Edit Individual Letters*, which will open a new document containing all the final letters. To send the letters straight to the printer, select *Print*.

[Top of page](#)

Concurrences

When correspondence is reviewed prior to internal or external distribution, concurrences are captured in the EPA's electronic Correspondence Management System or captured in hard copy and scanned to CMS.

A concurrence is a dated signature or initial or electronic approval that indicates an EPA official has reviewed the correspondence and that it follows correct agency language and format. Different kinds of correspondence, signature levels and content require varying levels of review and concurrence. Make sure that your documents receive the necessary concurrences before being signed and distributed.

Once letters have received the proper concurrences, they may be signed, closed in CMS, mailed, faxed or emailed to the addressees.

[Top of page](#)

Record Copy

Always prepare an official record copy of the letter and all supporting documents, such as the control sheet, signature approval sheet, enclosures and concurrences, if a concurrence sheet is used. Provide the official record copy to your records liaison or office records keeper for management and storage.

[Top of page](#)

Delivery/Conveyance

The hard copy original should be mailed, even when a PDF of the letter is emailed. There may be exceptions to this rule, however, based on customer preference or business process requirements. For example, most members of Congress do not accept hard-copy correspondence from federal agencies.

[Top of page](#)

Hard Copy Signature Packages

The EPA's Correspondence Management System has been developed to save paper and efficiently manage paper flow throughout the headquarters and the regions. CMS should be used to create, route, review, approve and store correspondence. While circumstances occasionally require the creation of hard-copy signature packages, all appropriate information, including the incoming and outgoing correspondence and concurrences, should still be captured in CMS. The contents of the signature package must match what appears in CMS and vice versa. Each package must include the following:

[Top of page](#)

Outside Front Cover

Up-to-date CMS Control Sheet The control, or tracking, sheet must be stapled to the front of the folder, file or package. If the correspondence was approved for signature in CMS, highlight the approval on the control slip.

[Top of page](#)

Inside Front Cover

Completed Machine Signature Authorization Form This is required only if a control was not approved for signature in CMS and if the recipient of the signature package is not the person who will be signing the outgoing correspondence. The completed form must include the control number and should be paper clipped to the inside front cover atop the incoming correspondence or action memorandum.

Incoming Correspondence or Action Memorandum Paper clipped to the inside front cover beneath the machine signature authorization form, if present.

Envelope(s) An addressed envelope of the appropriate size and type must be included for each outgoing letter. These should be paper clipped atop the machine authorization form and/or incoming correspondence or action memorandum.

[Top of page](#)

Inside Back Cover

Plastic Sheet Protector Paper clipped over the outgoing letter(s) on the inside back cover.

Outgoing Letter(s) and Enclosures The outgoing letter(s) and any enclosures should be paper-clipped to the inside back cover. Place "Sign Here" tabs wherever the letter(s) should be signed.

List of Courtesy Copy Recipients If needed, attach a list of the people to whom copies of the outgoing should be sent. This list should be paper-clipped to the inside back cover beneath the outgoing letter or memorandum.

Concurrences If hard-copy concurrences have been captured as part of the review process, these should be paper-clipped beneath the outgoing letter, enclosures, and list of courtesy copy recipients.

Corrections If there are out-of-date drafts included in the package, be sure to draw a diagonal line through the out-of-date document to ensure that it cannot be mistakenly mailed.

[Top of page](#)

Outside Back Cover

Nothing should be attached to the outside back cover.

[Top of page](#)

The Letter

Inside Address

Type the address in single-space block style, flush with the left margin. Do not abbreviate names or use nicknames. Include the addressee's full name and title.

Follow the standard format below when preparing the address block in a standard business letter.

<i>Standard Format</i>	<i>Example</i>
Addressee's name	Mr. Arthur Bouvier
Title (if applicable)	Director, Office of the Executive Secretariat
Company, Organization or Agency	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Street or Delivery Address	1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, MC 1101A
City, State, Zip Code	Washington, D.C. 20460
Country (only if international)	* place country in capital letters

In the inside address, state names are spelled out, not abbreviated by postal code. Washington, D.C. is the only acceptable abbreviation and must include periods after each letter.

United States territories (American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) should be spelled out fully in the inside address.

Do not abbreviate *street, avenue, boulevard, place, way, court, circle, road* or any other address notation.

Dr. Bitsy Bidwell	Mr. Wendell Borton	Ms. Declan Desmond
Physics Department	Office of the Earth	Director
University of Anywhere	U.S. Department of Parks	Pottery House
1300 Florida Avenue	100 Blacksburg Pike	1432 Gray Street
Bowie, Ohio 10101	Butte, Montana 30927	Booth, Maine 23432

Always place two spaces between the state and ZIP code. For all other elements of the address block, use one space to separate them.

If your correspondence is being sent to an international address, place the country's name in capitals below the city, state and ZIP code on both the inside and outside address. The United States Postal Service requires that the country be capitalized on the outside address (envelope).

Addressee's name	Mr. Jean Brodka
Title (if applicable)	Professor
Company, organization or federal agency	La Sorbonne
Street or Delivery Address	47, rue des Ecoles
City, Province, Postal Code	75230 Paris
Country	FRANCE

The inside address should not exceed seven lines. If any one line in the inside address is so long that it overruns the center of the page, it may be typed on two lines, with the succeeding line indented two spaces from the left margin.

Mr. Marshall Goldman

Executive Assistant

Agency for Toxic Substances, Icky Things, Cloudy Water,

indented two spaces → and Disease Registry

1000 Anywhere Street, S.E.

Trenton, Maine 33333

In some instances, an addressee may not have a street address, rural route, or box number because of the small size of their town or village.

Ms. Gil Gunderson

Tipton, Georgia 31794

If a letter is addressed to two or more individuals at the same address, list each individual's name on a separate line. Include parts of the address that are common to all individuals (organization, suite number, room number, department, etc.). Do not include the individual's position title (director, associate, etc.) unless it fits on the same line as her or his name. Separate letters or copies are mailed to each individual listed in the inside address. The person listed first should receive the original.

Ms. Rachel Jordan

Dr. Marvin Monroe

Testing Department

Congolite Industries

1300 One Way

San Diego, California 44444

On the respective envelopes for each individual, give her or his full address, including title, if applicable, and omit reference to the other individuals named on the inside address of the correspondence. The United States Postal Service two-letter postal code must be used on the envelope.

Ms. Rachel Jordan	Dr. Marvin Monroe
Testing Department	Testing Department
Congolite Industries	Congolite Industries
1300 One Way	1300 One Way
San Diego, CA 44444	San Diego, CA 44444

If the addressee lives in an apartment building, place her or his apartment number after the street address, separated by a comma. If the apartment number will not fit on the same line as the street address, place the apartment number on the preceding line. This rule also applies to floor and suite notations.

Mr. Alan Graycomb	Ms. Jesse Grass
Apartment 1345	10 Maple Drive, Apartment 2A
19876 Williamsburg Circle	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 30000

New York, New York 10034

Mr. Frank I. Grimes

3419 Porter Street, 18th Floor

Waccama, Washington 123456

When corresponding with an individual who lives on a rural route or highway contract route, do not write out *rural route*, *highway contract route*, *number*, *#* or *No.* in the inside address. Use RR to designate a rural route and HC to designate a highway contract route.

Mr. Lance Kaufman	Ms. Karen Xavier
RR 8, Box 416	HC 66, Box 54
Phoenix, Arizona 65432	Albany, New York 12321

Incoming correspondence usually reflects the standard address format and may be a good reference for any questions you have when addressing your letter.

[Top of page](#)

Salutation Line

The salutation begins with *Dear* and ends with a colon. It never ends with a comma. The salutation should be placed on the second line below the last line of the inside address and flush with the left margin. Salutations should include a courtesy title before the individual's name. If the individual does not have a special title, such as *Professor*, *Doctor*, *Mayor*, *Senator*, *Chief*, provide a courtesy title of *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Ms.* or *Miss*.

Dear Mrs. Holliday:

Dear Mr. Joseph:

Dear Judge Rabner:

When writing to a woman, unless you are certain that she prefers to be addressed by *Mrs.*, *Miss*, or *Ms.*, use *Ms.* Use *Mr.* to address a man when not using a

courtesy or special title.

If the addressee's gender is unknown, include the individual's entire name in the salutation line.

Dear Chris Smith: (instead of Mr. or Ms. Chris Smith)

Dear Pat Johnston: (instead of Mr. or Ms. Pat Johnston)

Address teenage girls as *Ms.* or *Miss.* Address teenage boys as *Mr.* For children under the age of 13, it is not necessary to include a courtesy title.

[Top of page](#)

Form of Address Rules

As a general rule, ampersands should never be used in addressing individuals.

Mr. **and** Mrs. Jonathan Dillinger

Chairman **and** Chief Operating Office

If a husband and wife have different last names or special titles, write their names as follows:

Dear Mr. Philip Stone and Ms. Jane Pizzaro: (or Mrs., if you are certain she prefers Mrs.)

Do not abbreviate an individual's name unless it is her or his preference or part of her or his legal name.

Correct Incorrect

Mr. Albert J. Right Mr. A.J. Right

Individuals and companies might not use periods between the elements of their names. Follow their preference when addressing them:

JCPenney

FAO Schwarz

ExxonMobil

If an individual includes a middle initial, place a period after the initial.

Mr. Nelson M. Muntz

In instances where *Jr.* or *Sr.* follows a person's name, do not use a comma after the last name. Always use a period after *Jr.* or *Sr.*, and never spell out *Junior* or *Senior*.

Mr. Roger Meyers Jr.

For Roman numeral designations, do not use a comma after the last name.

Mr. Roger S. Meyers II

Mr. Roger S. Meyers IV

For more information on the treatment of suffixes such as scholastic degrees, please see the section on *Forms of Address and Titles*.

When addressing a letter to a company or organization, do not use an ampersand unless it is part of the formal title.

Miles Davis **and** Company

Johnson, Pfeiffer, **and** Jones, Ltd.

Johnson & Johnson

Proctor & Gamble

If a company or organization is incorporated, use *Inc.* If a company or organization is limited, use *Ltd.* For limited liability partnerships, use *LLP*.

Do not use a comma between the name of the company or organization and *Inc.* or *Ltd.* unless it is a part of the formal business name.

Newsweek, Inc.

PepsiCo Inc.

Spell out *Company* or *Corporation*. However, in instances when a name is extremely long, you may abbreviate and use periods:

Company abbreviated as Co.

Corporation abbreviated as Corp.

Unless it is part of the formal business name, do not include *the* at the beginning of the name of a company or organization.

Always respect the corresponding individuals' or organizations' preferences when addressing them.

[Top of page](#)

The Body

Begin the body of the letter two lines below the salutation.

Do not hyphenate the last word of the first line of the opening sentence of your paragraphs.

Single space the text, but double-space between paragraphs, which corresponds to one blank line between each paragraph.

Do not indent the first sentence of a paragraph.

To ensure a uniform right margin, do not hyphenate more than necessary. Do not hyphenate more than two consecutive lines of text.

Do not number paragraphs.

Avoid separating the month and day at the end of a line. Wrapping the year to the next line is acceptable.

Your letter, addressed to Mr. Bob Smith on February 29, 2011,

[Top of page](#)

Widows and Orphans

Do not begin a new paragraph at the bottom of a page unless you can fit at least two lines of the paragraph on that page.

When continuing a paragraph on a succeeding page, carry over at least two lines.

[Top of page](#)

Long Quotations

If a long quotation consisting of two or more lines is included in your letter, indent the quotation an additional inch from the left and right margins of the page. Do not italicize or include quotation marks.

This is how a block quotation should appear in your correspondence. Make sure that your block quote is indented at least one-half of an inch from both the left and right margins of your correspondence and that the quotation is single-spaced.

[Top of page](#)

Succeeding Pages

All pages after the letterhead must be printed on plain, bond paper and must match the letterhead in quality and color. Number all pages starting with page 4 for letters totaling four or more pages.

Do not include an address block, salutation, date or name reference on succeeding pages.

[Top of page](#)

Complimentary Closing

The complimentary closing should be placed two lines below the last line of the body of the letter, seven tabs from the left margin, so that it is just to the right of the center of the page. Do not center the complimentary closing.

Use a comma after your closing:

Sincerely,

Sincerely is the agency's standard complimentary closing and should be used in all but one EPA correspondence. *Respectfully* should be used when correspondence is addressed to the President of the United States. Only the Administrator should write official EPA letters to the President.

[Top of page](#)

Signature Block

Leave three blank lines, which equates to four returns, between the closing and the typed name. Type the signing official's name aligned with the complimentary closing. Directly below the name, type the official's title, using two lines if necessary. Most agency letterhead includes a program or regional office designation in the upper right corner. Include the signer's program office only if the letterhead does not reflect this information.

If a title is too long to fit on one line, it may be continued on the succeeding line and should be indented two spaces. Do not include titles such as *Mrs.*, *Ms.*, *Mr.*, or *Dr.*, in the signature block.

Sincerely,

 Robert Jones

Director

Strategic Planning and

Management Systems Division

Because letters from the Administrator are printed on Administrator letterhead, the Administrator's signature block should include the Administrator's name only and not the title or office. This also applies to the Deputy Administrator's correspondence.

Sincerely,

Lisa P. Jackson

An acting official signs his or her own name and writes the word *for* before the typed name of the regular signing official.

 Sincerely,

for Robert Jones

Director

Office of Public Affairs

In some instances, correspondence might be signed by more than one official. A dual signature block incorporates two or more signatures placed side-by-side following a complimentary closing. Correspondence with dual signatures might also incorporate combined letterhead using elements from each agency or department if the signing officials are in different agencies.

When a dual signature block is used, the complimentary closing and first signature block should be aligned with the left margin of the paper, and the second signature block should be centered.

When the EPA is the originating agency or has federal leadership over the matter, the EPA letterhead should be the topmost or leftmost letterhead, if the letter is marked by dual letterheads, and the signature of the EPA official should be at the left margin.

The top-most letterhead should always correspond with the left-most signature.

When the EPA is not the originating agency, signature order should be determined by rank according to the federal order of succession.

[Top of page](#)

Enclosures

Enclosures are separate sheets of information included with correspondence, such as tables, forms, statements, pamphlets, and reference letters.

When an enclosure is identified in the correspondence, type the word *Enclosure* three lines, which equates to four returns, below the last line of the signature block, flush with the left margin. For more than one enclosure, use the plural form *Enclosures*.

Enclosure

Enclosures

If an enclosure is not identified in the body of the letter, after typing the word *Enclosure*, list the enclosure's identifying information.

Enclosures

1. Letter dated June 7, 2011

2. Copy of the Endangerment Finding

Do not substitute the term *attachment* for *enclosure*. Attachments are for memorandums; enclosures are for letters.

[Top of page](#)

Courtesy Copies

A courtesy copy is a copy of a letter that is sent to individuals or offices to whom the information is pertinent and appropriate but who are not addressed by the letter. Copied individuals are listed on the letter in a distribution list, following signature element or the enclosure, if any. If a courtesy copy list is too long to fit in a single column on one page, a dual column distribution list is permitted. A distribution list notates all of the individuals to whom the letter has been formally copied.

There are general courtesy copies, *cc*'s, and blind courtesy copies, *bcc*'s. Recipients of blind courtesy copies are not listed on the courtesy copy list but should be noted in the official record.

Courtesy Copy External Recipient(s)

Specify the courtesy copy by typing *cc*: two lines below the last line of the signature block. If there are enclosures, type *cc*: two lines below *Enclosure*. Align the *cc*: with the left margin.

Type two spaces after *cc*: and align with the first name all names and titles on succeeding lines.

Include the names of all external courtesy copy recipients on all copies of the letter. Do not note the names of any EPA recipients on the original or on any copy being sent outside the EPA unless there is a compelling business reason to do so, such as certain legal proceedings, project- or case-related correspondence with other federal agencies.

External courtesy copies, or copies sent to individuals outside of the EPA, should include a complimentary address, such as *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Ms.*, *Miss* or *Dr.*, and the copied individual's title after his or her name.

Enclosure

cc: Mr. John Smith

Director, Forest Management Services

Dr. Mark Jones

Director, Clean Earth Commission

Courtesy Copy Internal Recipient

When courtesy copies are sent to national-program or regional offices within the agency, do not include the copied individual's title, unless there is a compelling business reason to do so.

cc: Ron Slotkin

Sylvia Correa

Internal courtesy copies should be distributed appropriate to the copied individual's rank or position in the agency and her or his relevance to the content of the letter.

A list of courtesy-copied individuals should not be too lengthy. Use an informal distribution mechanism if more than eight people need to receive a copy of the signed correspondence.

Courtesy Copy Internal and External Recipient

In situations where both internal and external recipients are listed on the *cc*: distribution list, follow the more formal external style of including an individual's title after her or his name. All names should be listed in a consistent manner.

Blind Courtesy Copy

A blind courtesy copy, *bcc*:, indicates external recipients that are not copied on the original document and distribution list. A *bcc*: is used when the recipient does not need to know who is receiving a copy or the originator does not want the EPA recipients to know anyone is receiving a copy.

Do not include *bcc*: information on the original, any copy leaving the EPA or on any copy going to the addressee, the *cc*: recipients or other *bcc*: recipients. Rather, indicate blind courtesy copy on the official copy so that it is included in the records by typing *bcc*: two lines below the last line of the signature element, *Enclosure* or *cc*:, as applies.

Type two spaces after *bcc*: and align with the first name all names and titles on succeeding lines.

Enclosure

cc: Mr. John Smith

Director, Forest Management Services

Dr. Mark Jones

Director, Clean Earth Commission

bcc: John A. Nybody, Department of Commerce

Adam B. Public, Department of Commerce

[Top of page](#)

Nonpersonalized Business Letters

Nonpersonalized business letters are used when an addressee's name is unknown or when a letter is addressed to an organization with attention to a specific individual for handling. A nonpersonalized business letter follows the format of the standard business letter save for the exceptions that follow.

A nonpersonalized business letter does not include an individual's name. The company, organization, department or agency name is the first line of the inside address.

A salutation is not included.

An attention line follows the first line of the inside address:

The McGraw Hill Company

International Textbook Department

Attn: Mark Marksoy ← attention line designates specific individual

1400 Intelligence Boulevard

Baltimore, Maryland 23456

Subject Line

Nonpersonalized business letters include a *Subject*: line instead of a salutation. *Subject*: is placed three lines below the last line of the address flush with the left margin.

Subject: is always followed by a colon (:).

Keep your subject short. If a subject needs more than one line, continue the information on the succeeding line, with the first letter flush with the S in *Subject*:. Do not indent two spaces from the left margin.

Subject: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Endangerment Finding

If you are responding to a nonpersonalized letter, make the subject line in your draft read exactly as it does on the incoming letter.

If a term for which an acronym is frequently used is found in your subject line, spell out each element of the acronym:

Subject: The Clean Air Act Advisory Committee's Findings

Reference

A reference may follow the subject line if the writer wants to draw attention to important information that aids to the understanding of the correspondence or if the amount of references is too large to be included in the opening paragraph of the body.

To use a reference, type *Ref*: two lines below the *Subject*: followed by an abbreviated listing of the references. Be as compact as possible when using references; type dates in numeric form instead of written out. List references in (a), (b), (c) form, single-spaced with the most recently dated reference first.

Subject: Advisory Committee Findings of Water Levels in the Grand Canyon

Ref: (a) Letter dated 09/09/99 to the Administrator

(b) Advisory Committee Federal Register Listing 04/18/96

There is no complimentary closing in a nonpersonalized business letter.

[Top of page](#)

Legal Letters

The EPA's Office of General Counsel and select other offices within the programs and regions use the legal-letter format. This type of format should be used only for legal correspondence relating to specific cases, protests, patents or licenses.

The legal-letter format follows the standard business-letter format with the exception of a caption. Other than the caption, all standard business letter elements apply.

A caption should be noted by *Re*:, which is indented one tab from the left margin and between the inside address and salutation. Captions cite specific information that relates to the letter's topic.

Mr. John Schmidt

Apartment 1345

19876 Williamsburg Circle

New York, New York 10034

Re: Jane vs. John

Civil Action No. 7-98-999

If more than one line is needed, place succeeding lines flush with the first line of the caption.

Indent the entire caption one tab from the letter's left margin.

[Top of page](#)

Multiple Addressee Letters

Multiple addressee letters are incoming letters that have been signed by more than one person. Prepare an identical letter for each individual regardless of whether they are at the same address.

For individuals at the same address, include the name of each addressee on a separate line in the inside address block.

Mrs. Joanne T. Citizen

Mr. John Q. Public

1202 Pennsylvania Avenue

Trenton, Missouri 11111

The salutation line should address all individuals included in the inside address block.

Dear Mrs. Citizen and Mr. Public:

In general, the maximum number of individuals that should be addressed in this manner is two. In some situations, it might be necessary to address three this way, but never four or more.

For individuals at different addresses, include only one individual's name in the inside address block per letter.

Sending an identical letter to each individual ensures that he or she will receive the information he or she has requested.

[Top of page](#)

Petitions

If there is no other identifying information, such as organization, group, company or business, address correspondence to the first individual whose name appears on a petition using the address from which the petition originated.

[Top of page](#)

Resolutions

Depending on its content, a resolution might require an agency response. Some resolutions are sent directly from an organization or governing body, while others are sent via an intermediate employee to that organization or governing body, such as clerk of a legislative body or county treasurer.

If a resolution requires a response, address the organization, individual or governing body that signed the petition or from which the resolution originated.

[Top of page](#)

Condolence Letters

Condolence letters are prepared by the Office of the Executive Secretariat for the Administrator's signature upon the notification of the death of a current or former EPA employee.

Condolence letters are addressed to the next of kin and are mailed to the home, not a funeral parlor or other location. Requests must include a valid residential mailing address.

In some circumstances, OEX may prepare a condolence letter following the death of an immediate family member of a current or former employee.

Condolence letters are completed and mailed within 5 business days from the time OEX is notified of the death.

Condolence letters signed by the Administrator do not preclude employees from sending personal condolences.

[Top of page](#)

Retirement Letters and Certificates

Retirement letters and certificates are prepared for employees upon their retirement from the EPA after a period of five or more years of federal service.

Headquarters and regional human resources officers coordinate a monthly report of retirees for the Office of the Executive Secretariat. There is no need for individual offices to prepare or request retirement letters from OEX. The Office of Human Resources in OARM regularly provides OEX with information about all retirements based on paperwork officially submitted by retiring employees.

OEX prepares and dispatches retirement letters and certificates within five business days of receiving the monthly report and periodic updates or amendments.

[Top of page](#)

Scout Letters

Scout letters are prepared for young men who have attained the distinction of Eagle Scout and young women who have earned the Girl Scout Gold Award following a written request for a congratulatory letter.

Requests for scout letters are mailed to the attention of the Administrator from an array of individuals: scouts, parents, family members and scout leaders.

Scout letter requests are forwarded to OEX, where they are processed, prepared and dispatched within five business days.

In some instances, a letter is requested by a date sooner than the established EPA due date and may be rushed to accommodate the request.

[Top of page](#)

The Envelope

General

Use only agency-approved envelopes and mailers. All outgoing EPA mail must be placed in approved mailers and processed internally by an EPA mail center.

Do not place official agency correspondence in U.S. Postal Service mailboxes or drop it off at a USPS branch office.

Use a letter-size envelope (4 1/8 by 9 1/2 inches) whenever possible.

Use an envelope that is only slightly larger than the material being mailed. For an 8 1/2 by 11-inch item that cannot be folded without being damaged, use a 9 1/2 by 12-inch envelope.

Whenever possible, avoid using an envelope larger than 9 1/2 by 12 inches.

For a booklet or other bulk item that cannot be folded, use an envelope that is not more than 1 inch longer or wider than the item inserted. For batch mailings, or several mail items sent to the same address in the same envelope, let the largest item determine the appropriate envelope or mailer.

Flat-sized envelopes are generally used for special correspondence that cannot or should not be folded or, if folded, would not reasonably fit into a standard letter-sized envelope. Standard EPA flat-sized envelopes are rectangular in shape, manila-colored and measure 9 1/2 by 12 inches.

Never use window envelopes to mail any agency correspondence.

Consult with your mail center manager before using any nonstandard EPA envelope or mailer.

Custom-Designed Mail

A custom-designed mail envelope is used to dispatch private, confidential or urgent interagency mail to EPA offices outside of headquarters, such as labs or regional offices. A custom-designed mail envelope should not be placed in the regular mail stream, as it receives special processing by the mail center. For any questions regarding custom-designed mail envelopes, contact your mail center manager.

Pouch

To dispatch intra-agency mail outside of the same geographical area, such as mail sent between headquarters and a region, lab or field office, use a completely addressed official mail envelope and mark it *POUCH*. Some offices do not accept pouch mail, so please check with your mail center manager in advance.

Interoffice Mail

To dispatch internal mail between agency offices located within the same geographical area, use a government messenger envelope, which is also known as an interoffice mail envelope or "holey Joe." Include the addressee's name, office, mail code, building and room number. Do not use USPS mail envelopes to

dispatch interoffice mail.

[Contacts](#)

For any questions you may have regarding the mailing of EPA correspondence, such as cost, special delivery services, expedited mailing, bulk mail, shipping requirements, etc., contact your mail center manager.

[Top of page](#)

Outside Address

Follow the examples below for the correct placement of address on the front of your envelope/mailer. The address line on the front of the envelope/mailer should be limited to five lines, unless the correspondence is being mailed to an international address, and should follow the proper address sequence. See the examples below:

<i>Standard Format (Domestic)</i>	<i>Example</i>
Addressee's name	Mr. John Smith
Title (if applicable)	Director, History Office
Company, Organization or Agency	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Street or Delivery Address	1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, Floor 5
City, State ZIP Code	Washington, DC 20460
<i>Standard Format (Foreign)</i>	<i>Example</i>
Addressee's name	Mr. Henry Doe
Title (if applicable)	Director, Treasury Office
Company, Organization or Agency	British Trust
Street or Delivery Address	15 Lord and Lady Street
City/State ZIP Code	London PQS5BF
Country	UNITED KINGDOM

The outside address must include a 5-digit ZIP code, if domestic. Include the expanded ZIP code (or ZIP+4), if known.

08065-1445

The outside address should reflect the same formal standards as the inside address, except that the two-letter postal abbreviations for states should be used, per USPS regulations. Do not abbreviate *street*, *avenue*, *place*, *road* or any other address notation. Abbreviations should never be used in an inside address or in the body of correspondence, except for *Washington, D.C.*

Type, stamp or print the address in the standard typeface and font size of Times New Roman, 12 point. Avoid using script or italics.

Do not capitalize the address. The only element of the outside address that should be fully capitalized is any foreign country designation. When correspondence is mailed internationally, the country name is placed on the last line of both the inside and outside address following the city, state and postal code.

[Top of page](#)

EPA Mail Codes

Office mail codes are used to identify headquarters or regional offices from which correspondence originates and to which items returned for nondelivery are sent. Mail codes are used to aid mailroom personnel in the processing and routing of all incoming, interoffice and outgoing mail. The Printing, Mail, and Forms Management Branch in the Office of Administration and Resource Management develops and assigns mail codes. The [EPA National Locator](#) is a useful reference for current mail codes and organizational codes. Use mail codes on all envelopes, mailing labels, forms and publications.

Mail codes are placed on the top left corner of the envelope or mailing label, alongside or following the agency's address.

Mail codes may be printed, stamped or handwritten on the outside of the envelope.

[Top of page](#)

[Local Intranets](#)[Ask a Librarian](#)[How Do I?](#)[A-Z Index](#)

Memorandums

[Home](#) | [Correspondence Management](#) | [Clear, Concise, and Plain Writing](#) | [Grammar, Style, and Usage Guide](#) | [Letters](#) | [Memorandum](#) | [Electronic Correspondence](#) | [Forms of Address and Titles](#)

On this page:

- [General](#)
- [Word Processing](#)
- [Stationery](#)
- [Double-Sided Printing](#)
- [Ink](#)
- [Typeface](#)
- [Margins](#)
- [Page Numbers](#)
- [Date](#)
- [Memorandum Elements: MEMORANDUM](#)
- [Memorandum Elements: SUBJECT:](#)
- [Memorandum Elements: FROM:](#)
- [Memorandum Elements: THRU:](#)
- [Memorandum Elements: TO](#)
- [Body of Memorandum](#)
- [One-Paragraph Memorandum](#)
- [Succeeding Pages](#)
- [Attachments](#)
- [Concurrence](#)
- [Internal Courtesy Copies, Blind Courtesy Copies](#)
- [Action Memorandum](#)
- [Basic Elements of Action Memorandums](#)
- [Information Memorandum](#)
- [Basic Information Memorandum Elements](#)
- [Multiple Addressee Memorandums](#)
- [Memorandum of Understanding/Memorandum of Agreement](#)
- [Memorandum of the Record/Memorandum for the Record](#)
- [Memorandum of Call \(Telephone/Visitor Messages\)](#)
- [Mass-Mailer Memorandums from the Administrator](#)

All intra-agency correspondence should be prepared as memorandums. Memorandums also can be sent to recipients in the White House at the discretion of the Administrator, but, generally, all external correspondence should be prepared as letters. The guidelines in this

General

Always prepare an official record copy of the memorandum and all supporting documents, such as control sheet, signature approval sheet, attachments and concurrences. All memorandums should be entered into the Correspondence Management System during processing.

[Top of page](#)

Word Processing

Microsoft Word is the standard agency word processing software. All word processing, except for legal documents and documents for which another federal agency has prescribed a specific format, must be produced in Microsoft Word.

When preparing correspondence, documents should be prepared in either a *Draft* or *Print Layout* view. Do not prepare documents in *Web Layout* as the document may be formatted differently.

[Top of page](#)

Stationery

Memorandums should be printed on pre-printed letterhead. The use of computer-generated letterhead is discouraged for hard-copy correspondence but acceptable for signed correspondence transmitted via email as PDF files. This letterhead requirement applies to all agency correspondence, even routine and internal communications signed by any EPA staff member.

Use letterhead appropriate to the office in which the signing official is located. Letterhead should correspond with the signing official's office, not the office in which the correspondence originated.

Use *The Administrator* letterhead when a memorandum is to be signed by the Administrator or given the Administrator's signatory approval.

Use *Deputy Administrator* letterhead when a memorandum is to be signed by the Deputy Administrator or given the Deputy Administrator's signatory approval.

Use *Office of the Administrator* letterhead when a memorandum is to be signed by other personnel in the Immediate Office of the Administrator and Deputy Administrator.

National-program offices and AO staff offices use office-specific stationery, such as Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, Office of General Counsel, Office of Environmental Information.

All pages after the letterhead must be printed on plain, bond paper and must match the letterhead in quality and color.

[Top of page](#)

Double-Sided Printing

Memorandums must be printed doubled sided. Only in rare instances when printer limitations prohibit double-sided printing may a Memorandum be printing single sided.

When signing memorandums with text on the other side of the paper, the signor should use care not to sign in a pen with ink that will bleed through to other side of the paper.

[Top of page](#)

Ink

Use black ink when printing memorandums.

As a matter of personal preference, signing officials may use blue or black ink to affix their signature to correspondence. No other colors are acceptable for official correspondence.

[Top of page](#)

Typeface

Correspondence should be typed in 12 point Times New Roman.

Italics should be used only in the instances prescribed in the "Grammar, Style and Usage" section of the *Correspondence Manual*. Never type an entire document in script or italics.

The line spacing of correspondence should be single spaced.

Use only one space at the end of each sentence and after all punctuation marks. The use of two spaces after each sentence is an antiquated practice dating to the era of typewriters when one space was an insufficient amount of space between the sentences for the reader. With the introduction of proportional fonts in computer word processing, double-sentence spacing became obsolete long ago. These proportional fonts automatically assign appropriate horizontal space to each character, including punctuation marks, so there is no need to manually increase spacing between sentences with two spaces. The [Associated Press Stylebook](#) also calls for only one space.

[Top of page](#)

Margins

Use 0.75-inch margins on all four sides of a memorandum. Seven returns from the top should align the first line of the text so that it is just below the office name in the right margin of the letterhead. Add an eighth return when necessary to keep the first line below a long office name on the letterhead.

In some instances, a program or regional office may prescribe a specific margin format for certain types of correspondence. Check to make sure that you are using the prescribed margins before preparing your correspondence.

All correspondence should be aligned to the left. Do not center, justify, or right-align the text.

[Top of page](#)

Page Numbers

Use page numbers only for documents consisting of four or more pages and begin numbering with page 3.

Center the page number at the bottom of all succeeding pages. Do not enclose the page number in quotes, dashes, or parentheses.

[Top of page](#)

Date

The date can be rubber stamped or typed. Type the date only when you are certain that is the date the memorandum will be signed or if you are permitted to reprint a final copy after it has been approved for signature.

If a typed date is not included, once a memorandum has been signed, the signing office or official will rubber stamp the date, centered at the top of the first page, approximately 1/4 inch below the letterhead.

[Top of page](#)

Memorandum Elements: MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM should be typed in capital letters, bolded and underlined; should be placed just below the office heading of the letterhead; and should be flush with the left margin.

[Top of page](#)

Memorandum Elements: SUBJECT:

Type **SUBJECT:** in bolded, capital letters two lines below **MEMORANDUM**, flush with the left margin and be followed by a colon.

Type the subject following a one-tab indentation to the right of subject heading. Capitalize the first letter of each word of the subject line, but do not capitalize articles, conjunctions and prepositions unless they are the first word of the subject

SUBJECT: Administrator's Seven Priorities

The subject line is a brief summary of the main topic of the memorandum. Limit the subject to one line whenever possible.

If your subject does not fit onto one line, begin the second line aligned with the first character of the subject itself.

SUBJECT: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 2011 Science Advisory Board Selections

Action or information memorandums addressed to the Administrator, Deputy Administrator and other senior officials may be indicated in bolded, capital letters at the end of the subject line:

SUBJECT: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Science Advisory Board Selections

for 2006 - **ACTION** (or **INFORMATION**) **MEMORANDUM**

Spell out acronyms or abbreviations in the subject line.

[Top of page](#)

Memorandum Elements: FROM:

Type **FROM:** in bolded, capital letters two lines below the subject and flush with the left margin. Type the name and title of the person who will sign the memorandum to the right of *from*. The signer's office should be written directly under her or his name. Memorandums from the Administrator and Deputy Administrator do not have their titles under their names because they are printed on their respective letterheads.

The first letter of the signer's name should be even with the first letter of the subject line.

SUBJECT: Scientific Integrity: Our Compass for Environmental Protection

FROM: Lisa P. Jackson

SUBJECT: Announcement of Microsoft Office as the Standard Productivity Suite

FROM: Mark May, Director

Office of Technology Operations and Planning

[Top of page](#)

Memorandum Elements: THRU:

A *thru*line is used only when one or more individuals are needed to endorse, concur or coordinate information contained in a memorandum prior to its release. Add a blank line between multiple *thru* addressees as illustrated below.

Type **THRU:** in bolded, capital letters two lines below the *from* line and flush with the left margin.

If a *thru*line is used, indicate the individual's full name, title and office. The first letter in a *thru*line should be even with the first letter in the **SUBJECT:** and **FROM:** lines.

FROM: Bob Hendrix, Director

Office of the Executive Secretariat

THRU: Twanna Smith, Director of Hiring

Human Resources

Angela Brookes, Deputy Director of Hiring

Human Resources

TO:OARM Staff Members

Staff members identified on the *thru* line should initial to the right of their name before forwarding the memorandum to the next *thru* recipient or those listed on the *to* line.

[Top of page](#)

Memorandum Elements: TO

Type **TO:** in bolded, capital letters two lines below two lines below the *thru* line. If there is no *thru* line in the memorandum, place *to* two lines below the *from* line and flush with the left margin. The first letter in the *to*line should be even with the first letter in the *subject, from* and, if used, *thru* lines.

If a memorandum will be distributed to specific individuals or officials, type their full names, titles and offices.

Generally, memorandums prepared for mass release or to specific program offices, regions, or labs do not specify individual names.

TO: All Employees

TO: Assistant Regional Administrators

TO: Senior Information Managers

[Top of page](#)

Body of Memorandum

Begin the body of the memorandum two lines below the last addressee listed in the *to* line.

Single-space the body of the memorandum, but leave one blank line between each paragraph.

Do not indent the first line of any paragraph. Do not number paragraphs. If your paragraph is broken into subparagraphs, you may number and letter the subparagraphs.

Hyphenate words sparingly to ensure a uniform right margin; avoid hyphenating more than two consecutive lines. Never hyphenate the last word in the first line, the last word at the end of the first paragraph nor the last word on the page.

Do not separate the month from the day at the end of a line. Wrapping the year is acceptable. If necessary, carry the entire date over to the next line. Also avoid separating proper names.

Do not begin a paragraph near the end of a page unless there is room for two full lines on that page. Do not begin a paragraph on a succeeding page unless two or more lines can be carried over from the first page. The final page of a multipage memorandum should include more than two lines.

When using a quotation that is more than two lines long, indent it at least 1/2 inch from the left and right margins. Do not enclose the quotation in quotation marks or parentheses or italicize it.

[Top of page](#)

One-Paragraph Memorandum

A double spacing format may be used if the body of the memorandum contains only one paragraph and consists of 10 lines or fewer.

[Top of page](#)

Succeeding Pages

All pages after the letterhead must be printed on plain, bond paper and must match the letterhead in quality and color.

Center a page number at the bottom of all pages beginning with page 4 of memorandums longer than three pages. Do not enclose the page number in quotation marks, hyphens or parentheses.

Use 0.75-inch margins for the top, bottom, left and right sides.

Do not type the addressee's name, the date or other identification on succeeding pages.

[Top of page](#)

Attachments

Attachments are separate documents included as supporting or supplementary material to a memorandum. Attachments can be letters, directives, tables, organizational charts, handbooks, pamphlets or a variety of other types of reference materials.

If an attachment is identified in the text, type *Attachment* three lines below the memorandum body, flush with the left-hand margin. For more than one identified attachment, use the plural form *Attachments* and indicate the number of attachments.

Attachment

Attachments (3)

If an attachment is not identified in the text, type *Attachment* or *Attachments* three lines below the last line of the memorandum body, flush with the left margin. Number and list each attachment on a separate line. If more than one line is needed for any listed attachment, continue the information on a succeeding line aligned with the first character of the name of the attachment.

Attachments:

1. Microsoft Office Technical Guidelines
2. Microsoft Office Deployment Questions Answered - Office Deployment Dates, Office Suite Protocol

Do not substitute *enclosure* for *attachment*. Attachments are used only for memorandums, while enclosures are only for letters.

[Top of page](#)

Concurrence

When memorandums are reviewed prior to internal or interagency distribution, concurrences are notated and captured in the Correspondence Management System.

A concurrence is a dated signature or initial or electronic approval that indicates an EPA official has reviewed the memorandum and that it follows correct agency language and format. Agency memorandums that require concurrence must receive the necessary concurrence before being authorized for signature and distribution.

Once a memorandum has received the proper concurrences, it may be closed out in CMS and dispatched.

[Top of page](#)

Internal Courtesy Copies, Blind Courtesy Copies

Prepare information copies for the EPA officials as needed. Prepare additional copies on a need-to-know basis.

Specify a courtesy copy by typing *cc*: two lines below the last line of the text or attachment, if included, and flush with the left margin. Single space individuals' full names, and do not include a courtesy title such as *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Miss*, *Ms.* or *Dr.*

Type two spaces after *cc*: and align with the first name all names and titles on succeeding lines.

cc: Bob Sussman

Charles Imohiosen

Courtesy copies should be sent only to individuals to whom the information is pertinent and appropriate. Copied individuals are listed on the memorandum, following the attachment, if any, or signature element. If a courtesy copy list is too long to fit in a single column at the bottom of the memorandum, a distribution list is permitted. A distribution list is a separate document that notes all of the individuals to whom the memorandum has been copied.

Blind courtesy copies can be used when the recipients of the memorandum do not need to know who has received a copy. Indicate blind courtesy copies by typing *bcc*: three lines below the last line of the text or attachment, if included, and flush with the left margin.

Type two spaces after *cc*: and align with the first name all names and titles on succeeding lines.

bcc: Sarah Dale

Megan Cryan

Do not type blind courtesy copy information on the original memorandum; type it only the copy for the official record.

[Top of page](#)

Action Memorandum

An action memorandum must accompany any document submitted for the signature of the Administrator, Deputy Administrator or senior officials unless the issue is well known or is clearly documented in the incoming communication. An action memorandum recommends a course of action to be considered by the Administrator, Deputy Administrator or senior official based on the importance of incoming documents, such as report, study, correspondence, court order or background information or upon further discussion in a meeting of the principals concerned.

An action memorandum is used to summarize important points so that the Administrator, Deputy Administrator or other senior officials do not have to research issues or read through lengthy documents to make a decision.

Attach incoming letters, relevant correspondence, background information, etc. as appropriate and identify them in the text of the action memorandum. Mark these attachments for easy reference.

Provide an approval or disapproval section of the memo so the Administrator, Deputy Administrator or senior official can indicate his or her decision by signing on the approval or disapproval line of the original action memorandum. Also include a *date* line to capture the date of the decision.

Examples of documents that can accompany an action memorandum include correspondence prepared for signature, EPA directives, *Federal Register* documents and interagency agreements.

[Top of page](#)

Basic Elements of Action Memorandums

Most action memorandum content can be expressed completely and clearly in one to two pages without supporting materials. An action memorandum should include the following basic elements, in order.

MEMORANDUM two lines below the office heading of the letterhead, flush with the left margin.

SUBJECT: After the subject of the memorandum indicate **ACTION MEMORANDUM** in bolded, capital letters.

ISSUE: An *issue* line should appear underneath and in all capital letters two lines below the *to* line. The *issue* line is used to state the problem or issue, preferably in one sentence or a brief phrase.

DISCUSSION: A discussion section provides pertinent information about the origin, background and implications of the issue. Previous related discussions should be referenced in the discussion section.

Be sure to include information that indicates whether actions by the Administrator depend on the actions of other officials, if action is expected on related issues or if a requested action is related to a temporary issue.

If your discussion section is long, you may break it up into subsections such as **FACTS** or **ASSUMPTIONS**.

ALTERNATIVES: When there is more than one alternative action, state each option, number it and list its pros and cons. If an option is the position of a particular agency office or individual, identify the office or individual. This information may be placed in parentheses after the option.

Some examples of influencing factors mentioned as pros and cons include the following:

- arguments in support of the recommendation;
- problems with the recommended course of action;
- advice concerning related pending issues;
- budgetary, personnel, legal or political implications in implementing the recommended course of action; or
- relation of the proposed action to policies or anticipated positions of the administration, agency or Congress.

RECOMMENDATION/APPROVAL/DISAPPROVAL: Phrase the recommendation in terms of the action that the Administrator, Deputy Administrator, or senior official should take.

DISPOSITION: In some cases, it might be convenient to include a section that gives advice concerning the next steps that should be taken to implement the decision, when and by whom. Include names of persons who should be notified of the decision and, where appropriate, the plan for public release and for Congressional and stakeholder notification.

DEADLINE: Some action memorandums may have a specific deadline in which an action must be approved or disapproved. The deadline element lists the timeframe, if any, in which a decision must be made.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: Include supporting papers and other relevant documents as attachments to the action memorandum. List these supporting documents at the end of the action memorandum.

CONCURRENCES: All offices directly associated with the subject must have an opportunity to review the recommendations and express agreement or disagreement.

COPIES: List offices that have received copies of the action memorandum.

Some program and regional offices may prescribe different action memorandum elements for their senior officials other than those listed above. Check with your program or regional office to ensure that you follow the correct format when preparing an action memorandum.

[Top of page](#)

Information Memorandum

An information memorandum is used to present informational material to the Administrator, Deputy Administrator and senior officials, such as a response to a request for information or a status report on a project or program.

Information memorandums should be brief and straightforward.

Attach supporting documents as appropriate and identify them in the order that they appear in the text of the memorandum.

If the information being provided is in response to a specific request, include the context of the question in the body of the memorandum.

Most information memorandums do not need to be cleared with senior management officials outside of the sender's office. The person who writes the memorandum may distribute copies to other offices, if such distribution is determined to be useful and appropriate.

[Top of page](#)

Basic Information Memorandum Elements

Compose an Information Memorandum using the following basic elements:

MEMORANDUM below the office heading of the letterhead, flush with the left margin.

Use the standard **SUBJECT**, **FROM**, **THRU**, if necessary, and **TO**, memorandum headings.

Indicate in bolded, capital letters after the subject of the memorandum that it is an **INFORMATION MEMORANDUM**.

PURPOSE: Indicate the reason for submitting the information.

TEXT or SYNOPSIS: Provide the text or synopsis of the information. Key statements or paragraphs of attachments should have appropriate references.

Senior Official Addressees

All memorandums prepared for the Administrator's signature that are addressed to senior officials should list the addressees in the following order:

Deputy Administrator

General Counsel

Assistant Administrators

Inspector General

Chief Financial Officer

Chief of Staff

Associate Administrators

Regional Administrators

Due to the degree of autonomy with which the Office of the Inspector General operates, certain memorandums should not be sent to the Inspector General.

All memorandums prepared for the Deputy Administrator's signature that are addressed to senior management officials should list the addressees in the same order, except that the Deputy Administrator should not be included in the list. It is customary to include the Administrator as a cc: on such memorandums.

General Counsel

Assistant Administrators

Inspector General

Chief Financial Officer

Chief of Staff

Associate Administrators

Regional Administrators

Due to the degree of autonomy with which the Office of the Inspector General operates, certain memorandums should not be sent to the Inspector General.

[Top of page](#)

Multiple Addressee Memorandums

When the same memorandum is going to multiple addressees within the agency and you would like to address it to one particular individual, use a multiple-addressee memorandum. The memorandum will be acted upon by each addressee as if it were individually addressed.

Following the **TO**: caption, type *See Below*.

Type *Addressees* two lines below the last line of the memorandum, flush with the left margin. On the following line, begin listing the addressees. If the list is too large to fit onto the bottom of the page, type *See Attached List* following the *to*: caption, and list the addressees on a separate sheet.

[Top of page](#)

Memorandum of Understanding/Memorandum of Agreement

Memorandums of understanding and memorandums of agreement are signed by more than one agency or organization that promise cooperation or coordination on specific issues, projects or agendas.

An MOU/MOA follows a different format than most memorandums and does not include letterhead, stationery or basic memorandum elements such as *subject*, *from*, *thru* and *tolines*.

An MOU/MOA is printed on plain bond paper. *Memorandum of understanding* or *memorandum of agreement* is centered at the top of the page in bolded, capital letters.

Among or *betweenis* centered below the MOU/MOA heading in bolded, capital letters.

A listing of agencies or organizations follows. Depending on the originating agency, the listing may be written in bolded, capital letters or written in regular type.

A title or brief summary generally follows two lines below the listing of cooperating agencies or organizations.

A statement of purpose; background information; goals and objectives; understandings or agreements and responsibilities; actions; and effects generally follow the title or brief summary in the MOU/MOA as separate captions.

Each signing official's name, title and office are listed below a signature line following the last line of the text. Place signature blocks side-by-side on memorandums that have two participating agencies or organizations. For memorandums that include numerous agencies or organizations, signature blocks may be listed on the left side of the page, with signature line and date to the right of the page. Leave three lines of space between each signature block.

Date appears under the signature line to notate the date the official signed the MOU/MOA. The date of signing may be handwritten or date stamped by the signing official.

Page numbers are included at the bottom of each page of the MOU/MOA. Some originating agencies or organizations include a page number on the first page. It is acceptable to do so for any MOU/MOA that originates from the EPA.

The left-most or top-most signature should correspond with the originating agency or organization.

Remember to forward a copy of all signed memorandums to your records custodian or liaison officer, even if all parties to the document have not yet signed it.

[Top of page](#)

Memorandum of the Record/Memorandum for the Record

A memorandum of or for the record is an informal internal memo used to establish official records of telephone conversations, conferences, meetings or travel. A to caption is unnecessary in an MOR.

An MOR may also be used to grant autopen authority for the Administrator's or Deputy Administrator's signatures.

An MOR may also be used by the Administrator, Deputy Administrator or other senior official to appoint an individual to act in his or her capacity for a period of time.

Designate an MOR by typing *memorandum for the record* or *memorandum of the record* in capital, bolded letters, two lines below the appropriate letterhead and flush with the left margin.

An MOR is an official agency record and should be filed in the office in which it is originated.

An official signs an MOR above his or her typed name.

A cc: notation reflects individuals who are to receive copies of the memorandum. Follow the cc: guidelines listed above.

[Top of page](#)

Memorandum of Call (Telephone/Visitor Messages)

When taking a telephone or visitor message, ensure that you have sufficient information including the caller or visitor's name; the spelling of his or her name; his or her organization, if any; his or her telephone number; and to what the call or visit is in reference. Always indicate the time and date that the message was taken.

[Top of page](#)

Mass-Mailer Memorandums from the Administrator

The Administrator occasionally makes announcements to all employees, to headquarters employees, to the Office of the Administrator or to other similarly large groups of recipients. Identical clearance, concurrence and records processes are followed for both email and printed memorandums.

[Top of page](#)

[EPA HOME](#)

[WORKPLACE HOME](#)

[EPA LOCATOR](#)

[ACCESSIBILITY](#)

[WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION](#)

[NEWS ARCHIVE](#)

[CONTACT US](#)



Electronic Communications

[Home](#) | [Correspondence Management](#) | [Clear, Concise, and Plain Writing](#) | [Grammar, Style, and Usage Guide](#) | [Letters](#) | [Memorandum](#) | [Electronic Correspondence](#) | [Forms of Address and Titles](#)

On this page:

- [General](#)
- [Email](#)
- [Facsimile](#)
- [Instant Messaging](#)
- [Correspondence Management System](#)

General

Electronic communication, such as email, instant messages, facsimile transmissions, podcasts, Twitter messages and Facebook posts, allows EPA employees to share information quickly and easily. Regardless of its form, electronic communication is formal agency communication and should reflect prescribed writing standards and responsibilities.

As a rule, it is acceptable to respond to electronic communications via a like electronic means, such as responding to an email with an email or to a query received via the website with an email. Correspondence received in hard copy generally should receive a hard copy response, although electronically sending a PDF of a letter is acceptable in most circumstances. A reply via email is acceptable for correspondence received via fax.

For all electronic transmittals that are entered into the Correspondence Management System, enter information about the person who signed the correspondence, not the person who forwarded the information or submitted the information to your office, unless the transmittal was through a formal memorandum.

[Top of page](#)

Email

Lotus Notes is the EPA's only approved email application. All email communications should be processed through Lotus Notes. Agency personnel are responsible for appropriate use of the Lotus Notes email system, and all agency-related email communications are considered official agency records if they contribute to the decision-making process and include substantive information.

For the purposes of this manual, electronic queries received through an EPA website, often through an html form that populates a Lotus Notes database, should be considered email, since the message is received in an electronic format and responses are generally made via email. One major difference is the storage and retrieval of Web queries. Rather than use the Correspondence Management System, Web queries will be stored in the custom or hybrid application designed to interface with the website, such as Region 2's Web Inquiry Tracking System.

Writers must ensure that electronic communications are formatted and written as professionally as hard-copy correspondence and follow the same standards set out in the *Correspondence Manual*.

While the 10-point Default Sans Serif font size and typeface are acceptable for emails, writers should use black for the font color unless special circumstances call for other colors. Follow the plain writing, style and spacing guidance that apply to letter and memorandum writing and be sure that grammar and punctuation are correct.

Do not use emoticons, slang words or abbreviations, such as *LOL*, *IMHO* or *OMG*. Do not type emails in all capital letters, as this may imply that you are shouting at the reader. Be sure that your subject line follows capitalization rules and is clear and concise.

Email messages should employ a personalized signature block that contains the writer's full name, title, office, the agency name and the writer's telephone and facsimile numbers. All graphics; inspirational, religious or humorous tag lines; quotations; or other types of sayings not pertinent to the mission of the EPA should be removed from a signature block before official EPA correspondence is transmitted, as they are inappropriate for professional communications.

Similar to hard-copy correspondence, an email message is a record if it documents the EPA's activities or provides evidence of an EPA business transaction or decision making and if you or anyone else would need to retrieve the message to find out what had been done or to use it in other official actions. This standard should be applied to both incoming and outgoing email, including electronic queries received via the EPA's websites.

[Top of page](#)

Facsimile

A facsimile may be used to transmit official EPA communication in time-critical situations requiring immediate transmittal, but email transmission is the preferred method in such circumstances. A fax transmission that qualifies as correspondence should contain a cover sheet with the letter or memorandum. A cover sheet should contain the EPA seal, the sender's contact information and other important information, such as date, recipient, fax number, sender, number of pages and notes or comments. The letter or memorandum being faxed should comply with the appropriate directives prescribed in this manual.

Never fax sensitive or classified correspondence, unless you have first obtained the necessary clearance, approval and permission to use the EPA secure fax systems. The EPA Security Office has secure fax systems that allow for the transmission of sensitive and classified communications.

[Top of page](#)

Instant Messaging

Lotus Notes instant messaging allows for real-time online synchronous communication between two or more individuals via its Sametime function. Employees should check with their supervisors about the use of Sametime.

Instant messages are similar to email messages in that if the messages substantiate an employee's work, document agency efforts or demonstrate agency decision making, employees must treat Sametime messages as records. To save a Sametime communication, select *Save Chat As* under the *File* drop-down menu from the dialog box. Employees should consult their records contacts or records liaison officers for more information about where and how to file Sametime records.

[Top of page](#)

Correspondence Management System

The Correspondence Management System is the EPA's standard correspondence tracking and workflow management system. Based in Documentum, it scans, logs, routes, tracks and stores incoming and outgoing correspondence, images, files and metadata for all national-program and regional offices. This paperless, Web-based application shepherds electronic versions of correspondence through creation, editing, review, approval and close-out process and creates a virtual record for each control. CMS's structure parallels the agency's organizational structure, with a corresponding CMS group for each national-program, regional, division, branch and staff office.

CMS offers many benefits to both users and managers. Many offices have found that CMS allows them to complete work more efficiently while eliminating unnecessary steps and duplicative efforts.

Paperless Environment

Since CMS is a paperless system accessed through the EPA Intranet, it reduces agency paper consumption, eliminates delivery delays inherent in paper-based systems and promotes faster overall processing of controls. Assignments are delivered instantaneously and reliably.

Instant Retrieval of Records

CMS stores all control information electronically, eliminating the need to spend time poring through paper records. This has greatly facilitated Freedom of Information Act requests and aided in providing documents for legal discovery.

Loss Prevention

As a Web-based system, CMS safeguards against loss, misfiling or misplacement of paper documents.

Unparalleled Search Capability

CMS allows users to search for documents using a wide variety of identifiers, including specific text, subject, addressee, dates, ZIP codes, cities, states and organization information. CMS has the best search mechanism of any Documentum-based content management application at the EPA.

Lotus Notes Email Notification

Whenever a user receives a new assignment or is asked to review information, he or she will be notified via email. Email notifications also are sent once correspondence that either a user or the user's office was handling has been closed, eliminating the need to distribute copies of signed responses.

Response Document Templates

Built-in templates help save time, increase accuracy and ensure consistency of both language and format when handling correspondence.

Complete Correspondence History

CMS provides every correspondent's complete correspondence history. CMS has a record of every piece of controlled correspondence sent by, on behalf of, or to that person.

CMS also maintains all of the metadata from the National Correspondence Tracking and Information Management System, the predecessor of CMS. This

information was seamlessly integrated with the CMS data, resulting in a decade-long correspondence history between the EPA and the public.

Reminder Notices

CMS tracks how long a piece of correspondence has been sitting in a user's inbox. If correspondence has been unattended or remains incomplete for a period of time longer than assigned, the employee will receive a reminder email. If correspondence continues to remain incomplete, email notifications are sent to the employer's office colleagues and finally to the office that originated the document.

Concurrence Capture

CMS captures concurrences as work moves through the application. These concurrences are authoritative, since CMS requires users to be registered; is secure; is password-protected; and authenticates users' identities against the Domino Directory.

Out of the Office/Proxy Feature

CMS has easy-to-use features for assigning work to another person in the office when a user takes leave. When an out-of-the-office delegation is made, it is in effect until the user logs in again after returning to work.

For unexpected absences, users can assign each other proxy rights, ensuring that work does not sit if someone is out sick or otherwise unable to come to work.

Please note that access to CMS is restricted to registered users. To request registration, please contact your local or regional CMS coordinator. If you have questions about the application or need assistance, send an email to CMS_Information@epa.gov. You can also call the CMS Helpline at (202) 564-4985 or CMS System Administrator Keith Livingston at (202) 564-9962.

[Top of page](#)

[EPA HOME](#)

[WORKPLACE HOME](#)

[EPA LOCATOR](#)

[ACCESSIBILITY](#)

[WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION](#)

[NEWS ARCHIVE](#)

[CONTACT US](#)



Forms of Address

[Home](#) | [Correspondence Management](#) | [Clear, Concise, and Plain Writing](#) | [Grammar, Style, and Usage Guide](#) | [Letters](#) | [Memorandum](#) | [Electronic Correspondence](#) | [Forms of Address and Titles](#)

On this page:

- [Abbreviations of Titles and Degrees](#)
- [Military Titles and Service Branch Designations](#)
- [Scholastic Degrees](#)
- [Religious Titles](#)
- [Spouse of Distinguished Individual](#)
- [Mr. and Madam](#)
- [The White House](#)
- [The Federal Judiciary](#)
- [The Congress](#)
- [Executive Departments and Independent Agencies](#)
- [American Missions](#)
- [International Diplomatic Missions/Organizations](#)
- [State and Local Governments](#)
- [Ecclesiastical Officials](#)
- [Educational Institutions](#)
- [Physicians, Lawyers, Judges](#)
- [Military Services](#)
- [Multiple Addressees](#)
- [Some Commonly Used Foreign Forms of Address](#)
- [Tribal Leaders](#)

The forms of address are

The Honorable is used to address current and former officials including Presidential appointees requiring Senate confirmation, federal or state elective office holders and tribal leaders. Do not address individuals in other positions of leadership, including county and city officials as *The Honorable*.

The Honorable is followed by an individual's full name and title in this format:

The Honorable Lisa P. Jackson

Administrator

The Honorable Eric H. Holder Jr.

Attorney General

The Honorable Douglas Kmiec

American Ambassador

When appearing in the text of correspondence, *the* is not capitalized:

... *the memorandums sent by the Honorable Jane H. White*

... *allow me to address the directive issued by the Honorable Jay B. Son*

After leaving their position, individuals may choose to retain their distinctive titles, such as *Judge*, *The Honorable* or *General*, throughout their lifetime. Follow the addressee's personal preference when deciding whether or not to use such titles.

The Honorable may be replaced by a title such as *Dr.* or *General* but should not be used in combination with another title.

Correct: Dr. Mark Doe

Incorrect: The Honorable Dr. Mark Doe

Correct: General Susan Black

Incorrect: The Honorable Mrs. Susan Black

Use *The Honorable* to address the heads of international organizations by name, unless the officials are entitled to *Her/His Excellency* because of a previous position.

Use *The Honorable* to address a former President unless he is entitled to and prefers to be addressed by another distinctive title, such as a military one.

Her/His Excellency is used to address foreign officers, foreign ambassadors to the United States, foreign high officials and former foreign high officials.

His Excellency Ambassador Daniel Ayalon

Ambassador of Israel

Her Excellency Ingrid Maria Iremark

Ambassador of Sweden

His Excellency Stjepan Mesic

President of the Republic of Croatia

It is customary to omit *Her/His Excellency* when addressing the British Prime Minister or cabinet members of certain countries within the British Commonwealth.

Individuals who hold the title *Her/His Excellency* may retain the title throughout their lifetime.

Abbreviations of Titles and Degrees

With the exceptions of *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Dr.* and *Ms.* do not abbreviate titles preceding full names in an address.

When a name is followed by abbreviations, the sequence is as follows:

1. orders (religious first)
2. theological degrees
3. academic degrees
4. honorary degrees

Using more than two degrees is unnecessary. If you must include more than one degree, after the first degree, include a comma and a space before the second degree:

Johanna Doe, D.D., Ph.D.

[Top of page](#)

Military Titles and Service Branch Designations

Long titles such as *Lieutenant Colonel* and *Brigadier General* may be abbreviated for the sake of balance and appearance when necessary.

Use only if necessary

Brigadier General John Mayhew Brig. General John Mayhew

or

Brigadier General Mayhew Brig. General Mayhew

Lieutenant Colonel Nina VanCleaf Lt. Colonel Nina VanCleaf

or

Lieutenant Colonel VanCleaf Lt. Colonel VanCleaf

For the examples above, the basic rank, such as *General* or *Colonel*, is not abbreviated. The salutation line should only reflect the individual's basic military rank.

Dear Colonel VanCleaf:

Dear General Mayhew:

A military service branch designation follows an individual's full name, separated by a comma. The elements of the military service branch are always capitalized.

United States Air Force USAF

United States Navy USN

United States Army USA

United States Marine Corps USMC

United States Coast Guard USCG

Military service branches are included only on the front of the envelope and on the inside address, but not in the salutation line.

[Top of page](#)

Scholastic Degrees

Abbreviate the designation of a scholastic degree. Type the initials of an individual degree with periods, but no spaces between them. Separate an individual's scholastic degree from his or her name by using a comma. Do not use a scholastic degree in combination with a courtesy title of address or with military service rank.

Correct: John M. Murphy, Ph.D.

Murphy J. John, M.D.

The Reverend George Black, D.D.

*Incorrect:*Dr. John M. Murphy, Ph.D.

Mrs. Murphy J. John, M.D.

The Reverend Dr. George Black, D.D.

Correct: John Smith, M.D

*Incorrect:*Mr. John Smith, M.D.

Correct: Dr. Jason James

*Incorrect:*Dr. Jason James, M.D.

Correct: The Reverend Sean Hampton, D.D.

*Incorrect:*The Reverend Dr. Sean Hampton, D.D.

[Top of page](#)

Religious Titles

When using the complimentary religious titles *The Reverend* or *Rabbi*, you may include the individual's scholastic degree after her or his full name.

Religious officials who have received doctoral degrees may be addressed as *Dr.* rather than their official religious titles. Follow the individual's preference when deciding which form of address to use.

The Reverend George Black, D.D. (or Dr. George Black)

The Reverend John Brown, Ph.D. (or Dr. John Brown)

Rabbi John Golden, D.D. (or Dr. John Golden)

Rabbi Rachel Golden, D.D. (or Dr. Rachel Golden)

Use these titles when addressing members of the clergy. They should never be abbreviated and should always include *The*.

The Reverend John Doe - denotes a clergyman

The Reverend Dr. John Doe - denotes a clergyman with a doctorate

The Right Reverend John Doe - denotes a bishop

[Top of page](#)

Spouse of Distinguished Individual

An individual does not share a spouse's official title and, therefore, should be addressed by his or her own appropriate title and last name.

The Vice President and Dr. Jill Biden

The Reverend John Smith and Mrs. Smith

Rabbi Linda Greenstein and Mr. Greenstein.

Married women may choose not to use their husbands' last names, especially if they use another name professionally. Always follow the individual's preference.

Senator Lois Lane and Mr. Clark Kent

[Top of page](#)

Mr. and Madam

When a woman occupies a high government position, use *Madam* before such formal titles as president, vice president, minister, prime minister, chairwoman, secretary and ambassador.

When a man occupies a high government position, use *Mr.* before such formal titles.

[Top of page](#)

The White House

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
The President	The President The White House Washington, D.C. 20500	Dear Mr./Madam President: Respectfully,
Spouse of the President	Mrs./Mr. (full name) The White House Washington, D.C. 20500	Dear Mrs./Mr. (surname): Sincerely,
Assistant to the President	The Honorable (full name) Assistant to the President The White House Washington, D.C. 20500	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Former President	The Honorable (full name) (local street) (local city, state ZIP code)	Dear President, Madam President (surname): Sincerely,
The Vice President (formal and informal)	The Vice President United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510 The Honorable (full name) The Vice President of the United States Washington, D.C. 20501	Dear Mr./Madam Vice President: Sincerely, Dr. Mr./Madam Vice President: Sincerely,
Former Vice President	The Honorable (full name) (no title) (local street) (local city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Director, Office of Management and Budget	The Honorable (full name) Director Office of Management and Budget Executive Office of the President Washington, D.C. 20503	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,

Secretary to the President (may include military rank)	The Honorable (full name) Secretary to the President The White House Washington, D.C. 20503	Dear (rank) (surname): <i>or</i> Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
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[Top of page](#)

The Federal Judiciary

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
The Chief Justice	The Chief Justice The Supreme Court of the United States Washington, D.C. 20543	Dear Chief Justice (surname): Sincerely,
Associate Justice	Justice (surname) The Supreme Court of the United States Washington, D.C. 20543	Dear Justice (surname): Sincerely,
The Clerk of the Supreme Court	The Clerk of the Supreme Court The Supreme Court of the United States Washington, D.C. 20543	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
U.S. Court of Claims	The Honorable (full name) Chief Judge, United States Court of Claims Washington, D.C. 20544	Dear Judge (surname): Sincerely,
Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts	The Honorable (full name) Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts Washington, D.C. 20544	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,

[Top of page](#)

The Congress

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
President of the Senate	The Honorable (full name) President of the Senate Washington, D.C. 20510	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
President of the Senate Pro Tempore	The Honorable (full name)	Dear Mr./Madam President:

	President Pro Tempore United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510	Sincerely,
Speaker of the House Of Representatives	The Honorable (full name) Speaker of the House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515	Dear Mr./Madam Speaker: Sincerely,
Majority/Minority Leader United States Senate	The Honorable (full name) Majority (or) Minority Leader United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510	Dear Mr./Madam Leader: Sincerely,
United States Senator	The Honorable (full name) United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510 or The Honorable (full name) United States Senator (district office street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Senator (surname): Sincerely, Dear Senator (surname): Sincerely,
Majority/Minority Leader House of Representatives	The Honorable (full name) Majority/Minority Leader House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515	Dear Mr./Madam Leader: Sincerely,
Sergeant at Arms	The Honorable (full name) Sergeant at Arms United States Senate (or House of Representatives) Washington, D.C. 20510	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
United States Representative	The Honorable (full name) House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515 or The Honorable (full name) Member, U.S. House of Representatives (local street) (local city, state ZIP code)	Dear Congressman/Congresswoman (surname): Sincerely, Dear Congressman/Congresswoman (surname): Sincerely,
Committee Chairperson	The Honorable (full name) Chairman, Committee on (name) United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510 or The Honorable (full name) Chair, Committee on (name)	Dear Mr. Chairman/Madam Chairwoman: Sincerely, Dear Mr. Chairman/Madam Chairwoman: Sincerely,

	House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515	
Subcommittee Chairperson	The Honorable (full name) Chairman, Subcommittee on (name of parent committee) United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510 or The Honorable (full name) Chair, Subcommittee on (name of parent committee) House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515	Dear Mr. Chairman/Madam Chairwoman: Sincerely, Dear Mr. Chairman/Madam Chair: Sincerely,
Joint Committee Chairperson	The Honorable (full name) Chairman/Chair Joint Committee on (name) Congress of the United States Washington, D.C. (ZIP code)	Dear Mr. Chairman/Madam Chair: Sincerely,
Senator-Elect	The Honorable (full name) (address, if known) or Care of the United States Senate	Dear Senator-elect (surname): Sincerely,
Representative-Elect	The Honorable (full name) (address, if known) or Care of the United States House of Representatives	Dear Congressman-elect (surname): Sincerely,
Office of a Deceased Senator	Office of the late Senator (full name) United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510	Sir or Madam:* Sincerely, <i>* If the name of the late Senator's or Representative's secretary or administrative assistant is known, the letter may be addressed to that person by name.</i>
Office of a Deceased Representative	Office of the late Representative (full name) House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515	Sir or Madam:* Sincerely, <i>* If the name of the late Senator's or Representative's secretary or administrative assistant is known, the letter may be addressed to that person by name.</i>
Chaplain of the United States Senate **	The Reverend (full name) Chaplain of the United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely, <i>** The title of Dr. may be used when appropriate. Reverend is not used with the surname alone.</i>
Chaplain of the House of Representatives **	The Reverend (full name) Chaplain of the House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely, <i>** The title of Dr. may be used when appropriate. Reverend is not used with the surname alone.</i>
Secretary of the United States	The Honorable (full name)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname):

Senate	Secretary of the Senate United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510	Sincerely,
Clerk of the House	The Honorable (full name) Clerk of the House of Representatives House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Resident Commissioner	The Honorable (full name) Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Delegate	The Honorable (full name) Delegate from (location) House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Comptroller General	The Honorable (full name) Comptroller General of the United States General Accounting Office Washington, D.C. 20548	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Librarian of Congress	The Honorable (full name) Librarian of Congress Library of Congress Washington, D.C. 20540	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Public Printer	The Honorable (full name) Public Printer Government Printing Office Washington, D.C. 20401	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Architect of the Capitol	The Honorable (full name) Architect of the Capitol Washington, D.C. 20515	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,

[Top of page](#)

Executive Departments and Independent Agencies

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
Cabinet Members	The Honorable (full name) Secretary of Energy *	Dear Mr./Madam Secretary: Sincerely,

	<p>Washington, D.C. 20240</p> <p>or</p> <p>The Honorable (full name)</p> <p>Attorney General of the United States *</p> <p>U.S. Department of Justice</p> <p>Washington, D.C. 20530</p>	<p>Dear Mr./Madam Attorney General:</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p><i>*If the official is in an acting capacity, add "Acting" before the title (ex. Acting Secretary of the Interior), the salutation remains the same - Dear Mr./Madam Secretary.</i></p>
<p>Deputy Secretaries</p> <p>Assistant Secretaries</p> <p>Under Secretaries</p>	<p>The Honorable (full name)</p> <p>Deputy Secretary of Energy *</p> <p>Washington, D.C. 20585</p> <p>or</p> <p>The Honorable (full name)</p> <p>Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Technology *</p> <p>U.S. Department of Commerce</p> <p>Washington, D.C. 20301</p> <p>or</p> <p>The Honorable (full name)</p> <p>Under Secretary of State</p> <p>U.S. Department of State</p> <p>Washington, D.C. 20410</p>	<p>Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname):</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname):</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname):</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p><i>*If the official is in an acting capacity, add "Acting" before the title (ex. Acting Secretary of the Interior), the salutation remains the same - Dear Mr./Madam Secretary.</i></p>
Postmaster General	<p>The Honorable (full name)</p> <p>Postmaster General</p> <p>United States Postal Service</p> <p>Washington, D.C. 20260</p>	<p>Dear Mr./Madam Postmaster General:</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
Head of an Independent Agency, Authority or Board	<p>The Honorable (full name)</p> <p>(title)</p> <p>(agency name)</p> <p>(street address)</p> <p>(city, state ZIP code)</p>	<p>Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname):</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
Head of a Major Organization within an Agency, if a Presidential Appointee	<p>The Honorable (full name)</p> <p>Under Secretary/Administrator</p> <p>National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration</p> <p>U.S. Department of Commerce</p> <p>Washington, D.C. 20230</p>	<p>Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname):</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
<p>Secretary of the Navy</p> <p>Secretary of the Army Secretary of the Air Force</p>	<p>The Honorable (full name)</p> <p>Secretary of the (Navy, Army, Air Force)</p> <p>Department of Defense</p> <p>The Pentagon</p> <p>Washington, D.C. (ZIP code)</p>	<p>Dear Mr./Madam Secretary:</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>

Chairman of a Commission or Board	The Honorable (full name) Chairman Federal Trade Commission Washington, D.C. 20580	Dear Mr./Madam Chairman: Sincerely,
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[Top of page](#)

American Missions

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
American Ambassador	The Honorable (full name) American Ambassador (city, postal code) (COUNTRY)	Dear Mr./Madam Ambassador: Sincerely,
American Consul General or American Consul	The Honorable (full name) American Consul General/American Consul (city, postal code) (COUNTRY)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Person (Special) Representative to the President	The Honorable (full name) Personal Representative of the President of the United States of America to (country) (street address) (city, postal code) (COUNTRY)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
American Minister	The Honorable (full name) American Minister (street address) (city, postal code) (COUNTRY)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. Minister (surname): Sincerely,

[Top of page](#)

International Diplomatic Missions/Organizations

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
Foreign Ambassador in the United States	Her/His Excellency (full name) Ambassador of (country) (local street address) (local city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Madam Ambassador: Sincerely,
Prime Minister of a Foreign Country	The Honorable (full name)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister:

	Prime Minister of (country) (street address) (city, postal code) (COUNTRY)	Sincerely,
United States Representative to the United Nations or Organization of American States	The Honorable (full name) United States Representative to the United Nations (or Organization of American States) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Madam Ambassador: Sincerely,
Foreign Minister in the United States (Head of a Legation)	The Honorable (full name) Minister of (country) (street address) Washington, D.C. (ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
Foreign Minister Counselor in the United States	The Honorable (full name) Minister Counselor Embassy of (country) (street address) Washington, D.C. (ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,

[Top of page](#)

State and Local Governments

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
Governor	The Honorable (full name) Governor of (state) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Governor (surname): Sincerely,
Acting Governor	The Honorable (full name) Acting Governor of (state) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Lieutenant Governor	The Honorable (full name) Lieutenant Governor of (state) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
State Senator	The Honorable (full name) (state) Senate (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,

State Representative, Assemblyman, or Delegate	The Honorable (full name) (state) House of Representatives (or Assembly or House of Delegates) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Mayor	The Honorable (full name) Mayor of (name of city or town) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mayor (surname): Sincerely,
President of a Board of Commissioners	The Honorable (full name) President Board of Commissioners of (name of city) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
<i>In most states, the lower branch of the legislature is the House of Representatives. In states like California, New York, New Jersey, Nevada and Wisconsin, the lower house is known as the Assembly. In others, such as Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia, it is known as the House of Delegates. Nebraska has a unicameral (one-house) legislature - its members are designated as Senators.</i>		

[Top of page](#)

Ecclesiastical Officials

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
Minster Pastor Rector (with a doctoral degree)	The Reverend (full name, degrees) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Dr. (surname): Sincerely,
Minister Pastor Rector (without a doctoral degree)	The Reverend (full name) (name of church) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Presiding Episcopal Bishop	The Most Reverend (full name, degrees) Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Bishop (surname): Sincerely,
Episcopal Bishop	The Right Reverend (full name, degrees) Bishop of (diocese) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Bishop (surname): Sincerely,
Episcopal Dean	The Very Reverend (full name, degrees) Dean of (church)	Dear Dean (surname): Sincerely,

	(address) (city, state ZIP code)	
Methodist Bishop	The Reverend (full name, degrees) Methodist Bishop (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Bishop (surname): Sincerely,
Mormon Bishop	Mr. (full name) The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr. (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Cardinal	His Eminence (given name) Cardinal (surname) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Cardinal (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Archbishop	The Most Reverend (full name) Archbishop of (diocese) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Archbishop (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Bishop	The Most Reverend (full name) Bishop of (city) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Bishop (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Monsignor (higher rank)	The Right Reverend Monsignor (full name) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Monsignor (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Monsignor (lower rank)	The Very Reverend Monsignor (full name) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Monsignor (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Priest	The Reverend (full name) (add initials or order, if any) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Father (surname): Sincerely,
Catholic Mother Superior of an Institution	The Reverend Mother Superior (initials or order, if used) (name of institution) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Reverend Mother: Sincerely,
Rabbi (with doctoral degree)	Rabbi (full name) (synagogue) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Dr. (surname): Sincerely,
Rabbi (without doctoral degree)	Rabbi (full name) (synagogue) (street address)	Dear Rabbi (surname): Sincerely,

	(city, state ZIP code)	
Orthodox Archbishop	His Eminence Archbishop (full name) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Your Eminence: Sincerely,
Orthodox Bishop	His Grace (full name) Bishop of (name of diocese) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Your Grace: Sincerely,
Orthodox Priest	The Reverend (full name) (name of church) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Father: Sincerely,
Seventh-day Adventist Minister	Pastor (full name) Minister, (name of church) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Pastor (surname): Sincerely,
Islamic Imam	Imam (full name) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Imam (surname): Sincerely,

[Top of page](#)

Educational Institutions

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
President or Chancellor of a College or University (with doctoral degree)	Dr. (full name) President (name of institution) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Dr. (surname): Sincerely,
President of a College or University (without doctoral degree)	Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms.(full name) President (name of institution) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Dean of a School	Dean (full name) School of (name) (name of institution) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Dean (surname): Sincerely,
Professor	Professor (full name)	Dear Professor (surname):

	Department of (name) (name of institution) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Sincerely,
Ph.D.	(full name), Ph.D. (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Dr. (surname): Sincerely,

[Top of page](#)

Physicians, Lawyers, Judges

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
Physician	(Full name), M.D. (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Dr. (surname): Sincerely,
Lawyer	Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms.(full name) Attorney at Law (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,
Judge	The Honorable (full name) Judge, Appellate Division The Supreme Court of the State of (state) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Judge (surname): Sincerely,

[Top of page](#)

Military Services

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
<u>Army, Air Force and Marine Corps Officers:</u>		
General Lieutenant General Major General Brigadier General	(Full rank, full name, abbreviation or service) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear General (surname): Sincerely,
Colonel Lieutenant Colonel	Same as Above	Dear Colonel (surname): Sincerely,
Major	Same as Above	Dear Major (surname): Sincerely,

Captain	Same as Above	Dear Captain (surname): Sincerely,
First Lieutenant Second Lieutenant	Same as Above	Dear Lieutenant (surname): Sincerely,
Chief Warrant Officer	Same as Above	Dear Chief Warrant Officer (surname): Sincerely,
Warrant Officer	Same as Above	Dear Warrant Officer (surname): Sincerely,
Sergeant Major Master Sergeant Sergeant First Class Technical Sergeant Staff Sergeant Sergeant	Same as Above	Dear Sergeant (surname): Sincerely,
Corporal	Same as Above	Dear Corporal (surname): Sincerely,
Specialist Classes 4-9	Same as Above	Dear Specialist (surname): Sincerely,
Private First Class Private	Same as Above	Dear Private (surname): Sincerely,
Airman First Class Airman Second Class Airman Third Class Basic Airman	Same as Above	Dear Airman (surname): Sincerely,
Navy and Coast Guard Officers:		
Admiral Vice Admiral Rear Admiral Fleet Admiral	(Full rank, full name, abbreviation of service) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Admiral (surname): Dear Vice Admiral (surname): Dear Rear Admiral (surname): Dear Fleet Admiral (surname): Sincerely,
Captain	Same as Above	Dear Captain (surname): Sincerely,
Commander Lieutenant Commander	Same as Above	Dear Commander (surname): Sincerely,
Lieutenant Lieutenant Junior Grade	Same as Above	Dear Lieutenant (surname): Sincerely,
Ensign Chief Warrant Office Enlistee	Same as Above	Dear (rank, surname): Sincerely,
<u>All Services</u>		
Retired Officer	(Full rank, full name, abbreviation of service), Retired (street address)	Dear (rank, surname): Sincerely,

	(city, state ZIP code)	
Chaplain	Chaplain (full name, rank, service designation) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Chaplain (surname): Sincerely,
<u>Service Academy Members</u>		
Army or Coast Guard Cadet	Cadet (full name) (Address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Cadet (surname): Sincerely,
Navy Midshipman	Midshipman (full name) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Midshipman (surname): Sincerely,
Air Force Cadet	Air Cadet (full name) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Air Cadet (surname): Sincerely,

[Top of page](#)

Other

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
Widow	Mrs. (husband's first and last name) or Ms. (wife's full name) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mrs./Ms. (surname): Sincerely,

[Top of page](#)

Multiple Addressees

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
One Woman and One Man *	Mrs./Miss/Ms. (full name) and Mr. (full name) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname) and Mr. (surname): Sincerely,
Two or More Men *	Mr. (full name) and Mr. (full name) (street address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mr. (surname) and Mr. (surname): Sincerely,
Two or More Women *	Mrs./Miss/Ms. (full name) and Mrs./Miss/Ms. (full name) (address) (city, state ZIP code)	Dear Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname) and Mrs./Miss/Ms. (surname): Sincerely,

* A letter to two or more persons may be addressed as illustrated or to only one of them when the other is mentioned by name in the opening paragraph.

[Top of page](#)

Some Commonly Used Foreign Forms of Address

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
<i>Afghanistan</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Argentina</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Argentine Nation (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Relations, International Trade and Worship	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Relations, International Trade and Worship of the Argentine Republic (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Australia</i>		
Governor General	Her/His Excellency (full name) Governor General of Australia (full address)	Dear Governor General: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	The Honorable (full name) Prime Minister of Australia (full address)	Dear Prime Minister: or Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms./Miss (surname): Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	The Honorable (full name) Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Brazil</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Federative Republic of Brazil (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,

Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federative Republic of Brazil (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Canada</i>		
Governor General	Her/His Excellency The Right Honorable (full name) Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada (full address)	Dear Governor General: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	The Right Honorable (full name), P.C., M.P.* Prime Minister of Canada (full address) <i>* Post nominal titles (such as the P.C., M.P. above) indicate that an individual holds a specific position, accreditation, office, honor, or educational degree. Individuals may choose to use more than one set of post-nominal titles.</i>	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	The Honorable (full name), P.C., M.P.* Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada (full address) <i>* Post nominal titles (such as the P.C., M.P. above) indicate that an individual holds a specific position, accreditation, office, honor, or educational degree. Individuals may choose to use more than one set of post-nominal titles.</i>	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Chile</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Republic of Chile (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Relations	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Relations of the Republic of Chile (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>China (Hong Kong)</i>		
Chief Executive	Her/His Excellency (full name) Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (full address)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms./Miss (surname): Sincerely,
<i>China (Macau)</i>		
Chief Executive	Her/His Excellency (full name) Chief Executive of the Macau Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (full address)	Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms./Miss (surname): Sincerely,

<i>China</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the People's Republic of China (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Premier	Her/His Excellency (full name) Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Premier: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>France</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the French Republic (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) Prime Minister of the French Republic (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the French Republic (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Germany</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Federal Republic of Germany (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Chancellor	Her/His Excellency (full name) Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Chancellor: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Greece</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Hellenic Republic (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime

	Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic (full address)	Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Haiti</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Republic of Haiti (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) Prime Minister of the Republic of Haiti (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Haiti (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>India</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Republic of India (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) Prime Minister of the Republic of India (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of External Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Indonesia</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Republic of Indonesia (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Iraq</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Republic of Iraq (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,

Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Ireland</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of Ireland (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) Prime Minister of Ireland (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Israel</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of Israel (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) Prime Minister of Israel (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Italy</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Italian Republic (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Japan</i>		
The Emperor	Her/His Majesty * The Emperor of Japan (full address) * Do not use the Emperor's given name in correspondence.	Your Majesty: * Sincerely, * Do not use the Emperor's given name in

		<i>correspondence.</i>
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) Prime Minister of Japan (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minster for Foreign Affairs of Japan (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Korea</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Republic of Korea (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Republic of Korea (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Mexico</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the United Mexican States (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Secretary of Foreign Relations	Her/His Excellency (full name) Secretary of Foreign Relation of Mexico (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Secretary: Sincerely,
<i>Pakistan</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Relations	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Peru</i>		

President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Republic of Peru (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) Prime Minister of the Republic of Peru (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Relations	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Relations of the Republic of Peru (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Philippines</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Republic of the Philippines (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Secretary of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Secretary: Sincerely,
<i>Poland</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Republic of Poland (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Russia</i>		
President	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Russian Federation (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Spain</i>		

King/Queen	Her/His Majesty (full name) King/Queen of Spain (full address)	Your Majesty: Sincerely,
President * <i>* The President of the Government also functions as the Prime Minister.</i>	Her/His Excellency (full name) President of the Government of Spain (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam President: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>Thailand</i>		
King/Queen	Her/His Majesty (full name) King/Queen of Thailand (full address)	Your Majesty: Sincerely,
Prime Minister	Her/His Excellency (full name) Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Minister of Foreign Affairs	Her/His Excellency (full name) Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand (full address)	Dear Mr./Madam Minister: Sincerely,
<i>United Kingdom</i>		
King/Queen	Her/His Majesty (name) (full address)	Your Majesty: Sincerely,
The Prime Minister of England	The Right Honorable (full name), M.P. * Prime Minister (full address) <i>* Post nominal titles, like M.P., indicate that an individual holds a specific position, accreditation, office, honor, or educational degree. Individuals may choose to use more than one set of post-nominal titles.</i>	Dear Prime Minister: Sincerely,
Foreign Secretary of England	The Right Honorable (full name), M.P. * Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (full address) <i>* Post nominal titles, like M.P., indicate that an individual holds a specific position, accreditation, office, honor, or educational degree. Individuals may choose to use more than one set of post-nominal titles.</i>	Dear Foreign Secretary: or Dear Secretary of State: Sincerely,
Secretary of State for Scotland	The Right Honorable (full name) Secretary of State for Scotland (full address)	Dear Secretary of State: Sincerely,
Secretary of State for Wales	The Right Honorable (full name)	Dear Secretary of State:

Secretary of State for Wales
(full address)

Sincerely,

[Top of page](#)

Tribal Leaders

As the first federal agency to adopt a formal Indian Policy, the EPA continues to work with tribes and tribal leaders on a government-to-government basis to protect the land, air, and water in Indian country. The EPA's American Indian Environmental Office maintains current tribal leader contact information. For questions regarding the EPA's Indian Policy or tribal leader information, contact AIEO.

Below is a list of examples of proper forms of address used when addressing correspondence to tribal leaders. There are numerous titles of address. The list below should be used as a reference guide, but it is not an exhaustive list of all tribal leader forms of address.

Addressee	Address on Letter and Envelope	Salutation and Complimentary Closing
Chief James Sappier Penobscot Tribe of Maine	The Honorable James Sappier Chief of the Penobscot Tribe of Maine 6 River Road Indian Island, Maine 04468	Dear Chief Sappier: Sincerely,
Tribal Chief Brenda Commander Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians of Maine	The Honorable Brenda Commander Tribal Chief of the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians of Maine 88 Bell Road Littleton, Maine 04730	Dear Tribal Chief Commander: Sincerely,
President Barry Snyder, Sr. Seneca Nation of New York	The Honorable Barry Snyder, Sr. President of the Seneca Nation of New York 12837 Route 438 Irving, New York 14081	Dear President Synder: Sincerely,
Principal Chief Michell Hicks Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	The Honorable Michell Hicks Principal Chief of the Easter Band of Cherokee Indians P.O. Box 455 Cherokee, North Carolina 28719	Dear Principal Chief Hicks: Sincerely,
Chairman Duane Big Eagle Crow Creek Sioux Tribe of the Crow Creek Reservation	The Honorable Duane Big Eagle Chairman of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe of the Crow Creek Reservation P.O. Box 50 Forth Thompson, South Dakota 57339	Dear Chairman Big Eagle: Sincerely,
Acting Chairman Pat Thomas Blackfeet Tribe of the	The Honorable Pat Thomas Acting Chairman of the Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Indian	Dear Chairman Thomas: Sincerely,

Blackfeet Indian Reservation of Montana	Reservation of Montana P.O. Box 850 Browning, Montana 59417	
Chairperson Marilyn Scott Upper Skagit Indian Tribe	The Honorable Marilyn Scott Chairperson of the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe 25944 Community Plaza Way Sedro Woolley, Washington 98284	Dear Chairperson Scott: Sincerely,
Chairwoman Joan Delabreau Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin	The Honorable Joan Delabreau Chairwoman of the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin P.O. Box 910 Keshena, Wisconsin 54135	Dear Chairwoman Delabreau: Sincerely,
Tribal Chairperson Connie Lewis Big Sandy Rancheria of Mono Indians of California	The Honorable Connie Lewis Tribal Chairperson of the Big Sandy Rancheria of Mono Indians of California P.O. Box 337 Auberry, California 93602	Dear Chairperson Lewis: Sincerely,
Tribal Chairman Greg Sarris Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, California	The Honorable Greg Sarris Tribal Chairman of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, California 320 Tesconi Circle, Suite G Santa Rosa, California 95401	Dear Chairman Sarris: Sincerely,
Chair Clifford Lyle Marshall Hoopa Valley Tribe, California	The Honorable Clifford Lyle Marshall Chair of the Hoopa Valley Tribe, California P.O. Box 1348 Hoopa, California 95546	Dear Chair Marshall: Sincerely,
Spokesman Mark A. Macarro Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians	The Honorable Mark A. Macarro Spokesman for the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians P.O. Box 1477 Temecula, California 92593	Dear Spokesman Macarro: Sincerely,
Spokeswoman Catherine Saubel Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians	The Honorable Catherine Saubel Spokeswoman for the Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla Mission Indians P.O. Box 189 Pauma Valley, California 92086	Dear Spokeswoman Saubel: Sincerely,
Ogema Lee Sprague Little River Band of	The Honorable Lee Sprague Ogema of the Little River Band of	Dear Ogema Sprague: Sincerely,

Ottawa Indians	Ottawa Indians, Michigan 375 River Street Manistee, Michigan 49660	
Chief Sachem Matthew Thomas Narragansett Indian Tribe of Rhode Island	The Honorable Matthew Thomas Chief Sachem of the Narragansett Indian Tribe of Rhode Island P.O. Box 268 Charlestown, Rhode Island 02813	Dear Chief Sachem Thomas: Sincerely,
General Manager Rick Landers Samish Indian Tribe	The Honorable Rick Landers General Manager of the Samish Indian Tribe P.O. Box 217 Anacortes, Washington 98221	Dear General Manager Landers: Sincerely,
Governor Bill Anoatubby Chickasaw Nation, Oklahoma	The Honorable Bill Anoatubby Governor of the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma P.O. Box 1548 Ada, Oklahoma 74820	Dear Governor Anoatubby: Sincerely,
Trust Board Chairman Raymond Kline Delaware Tribe of Indians	The Honorable Raymond Kline Trust Board Chairman of the Delaware Tribe of Indians 220 NW Virginia Avenue Bartlesville, Oklahoma 74003	Dear Chairman Kline: Sincerely,
Town King Louis McGertt Thlopthlocco Tribal Town, Oklahoma	The Honorable Louis McGertt Town King of the Thlopthlocco Tribal Town, Oklahoma P.O. Box 188 Okemah, Oklahoma 74859	Dear Town King McGertt: Sincerely,

[Top of page](#)
[EPA HOME](#)
[WORKPLACE HOME](#)
[EPA LOCATOR](#)
[ACCESSIBILITY](#)
[WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION](#)
[NEWS ARCHIVE](#)
[CONTACT US](#)